

an anarchist magazine of ideas & action

Fifth estate

Inside:

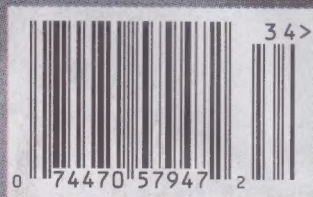
4 more years of resistance

Communalism & desire

Thoreau & Marx

Refusing the Market

USA \$3 Canada \$4



Anti-capitalist then, now, & forever

This issue on economy marks the *Fifth Estate*'s last edition of 2004, and as we approach our 40th anniversary edition, it feels critical to consider the decision we made 30 years ago to become explicitly anti-authoritarian and anti-capitalist.

For a brief period in the early 1970s, FE flirted with the kind of alternative journalism that we expect from weeklies like *Nashville Scene*, Detroit's *Metro Times*, and the hundreds of other free papers of that ilk. During this time, FE also attempted to run itself as a business. This phase of the project was a failure. To mark "the last issue of the FE as a capitalist enterprise," the volunteer editors who had been working together as the Eat The Rich Gang (some still involved in the project), made a series of decisions that we affirm today.

In 1975, the *Fifth Estate* collective refused to accept paid advertising and switched from a weekly to a monthly production schedule. The editorial collective of 1975 proclaimed: "The current staff has no sympathy with the *Fifth Estate* as simply another commodity sold in the marketplace . . . We compromise every-day of our lives under capitalism—when we alienate our labor on the job for wages, when we put up with the authority of others over us, and when the potential for human community and individual development is thwarted by the tyranny of capital. We don't want to compromise on a project which contends that it is tied to new ideas and new ways of living."

To this day, we maintain our commitment to working as volunteers and accepting donations but not paid ads. (We will make an exception: with our fundraising effort for the anniversary issue, we're seeking de-classified ads—see page 4.) As one collective member recently described it, "This has always been a project too valuable to contaminate with wage work. If you really believe in something, it is always worth doing for free."

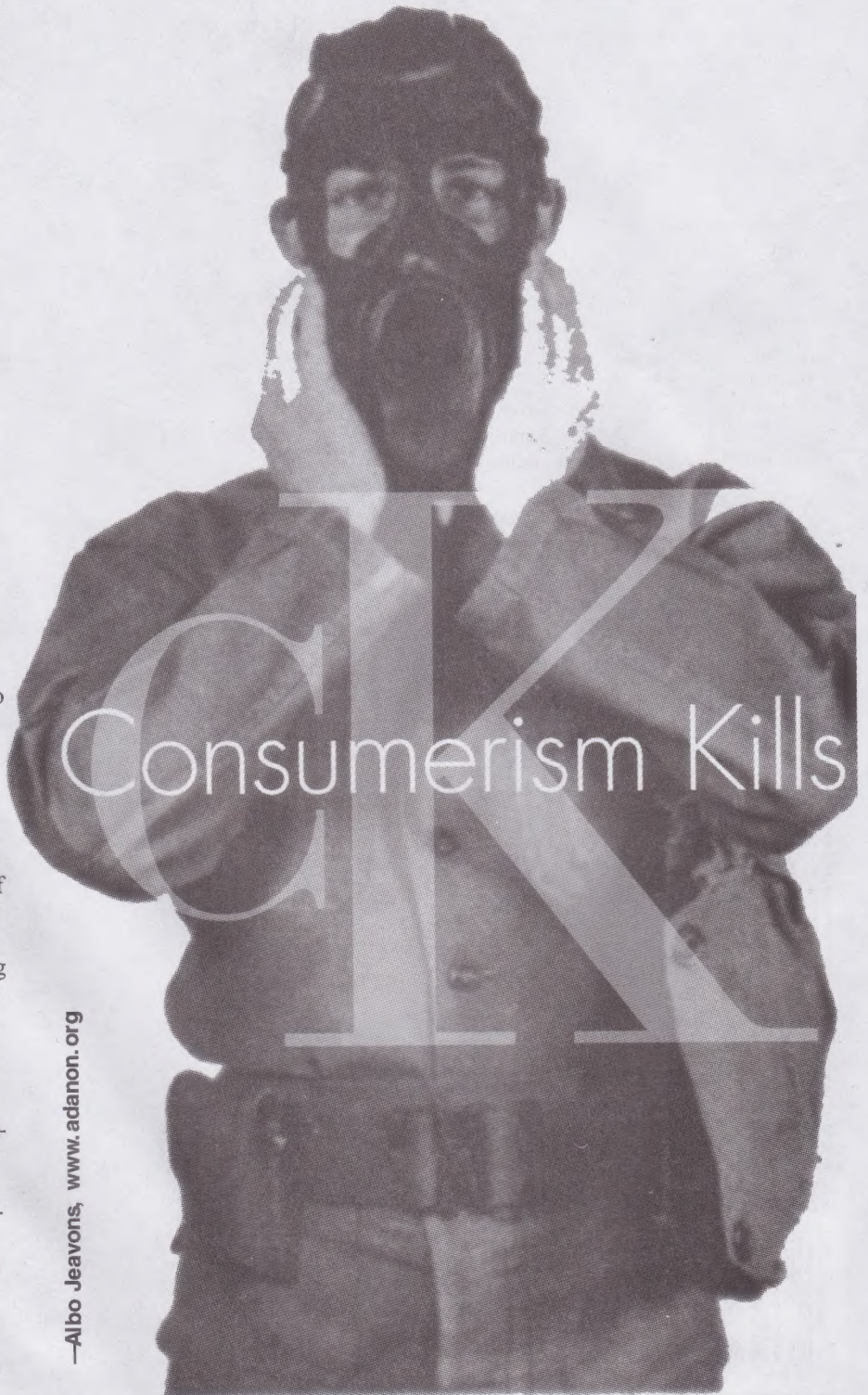
Not only do we refuse wages for the writing and art that appears in the *Fifth Estate*, we also refuse to copyright our work.

Even though our \$3 cover price and \$10 subscription rate are surprisingly low, we've decided not to raise those rates for now. While we believe that asking for money for the magazine is necessary, we also desire a publication that is affordable and accessible to all.

The ideas and theories that define our economy section reflect the manner in which we manage this project on a day-to-day basis. In a spirit of collaboration and anti-capitalism, we work for the day when this publication is unnecessary, when authority is abolished and these dreams are realized.

The current staff has no sympathy with the Fifth Estate as simply another commodity sold in the marketplace . . .

—FE Editorial, 1975

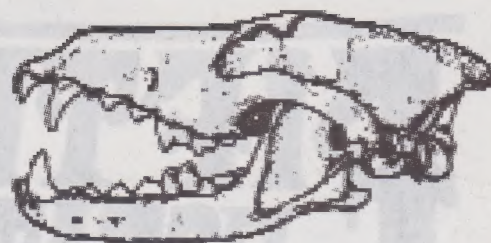


—Albo Jeavons, www.adanon.org

Fifth

367 WINTER 2004-2005

estate



Special thanks to artist-activist Joy Gamett for providing us with our cover illustration, taken from her 2004 painting "Burn." Gamett's paintings are based on mass-media news photographs of figures swept up in states of extreme emotional or physical expression, from street riots to rock'n'roll stage performances. One of her paintings, "Molotov," is taken from a 1979 photograph of a Sandinista hurling a flaming Pepsi bottle; it prompted a copyright lawsuit claiming that Gamett "stole" the image. In response to threats from the intellectual property mafia, artists who challenge the idea that media images (especially those that are supposedly documentarian) can be owned, licensed, bought and sold have begun an action campaign called "Joywar." For more information on Joywar, copyright, and political economy of images, see Gamett's essay "Steal This Look" from the Summer 2004 issue of the on-line journal "Intelligent Agent":

intelligentagent.com/archive/Vol4_No2_ip_gamett.htm

The *Fifth Estate* (FE) is an unincorporated, cooperative magazine published since 1965. An anti-authoritarian publication produced by a volunteer collective of friends and comrades, we hold a range of views on all issues, but share an anarchist orientation and a commitment to a non-dogmatic and action-oriented radical politics. As opposed to professionals who publish to secure wages or invest in the media information industry, we produce the magazine as an expression of resistance to an unjust and destructive society.

No copyright. No paid staff.

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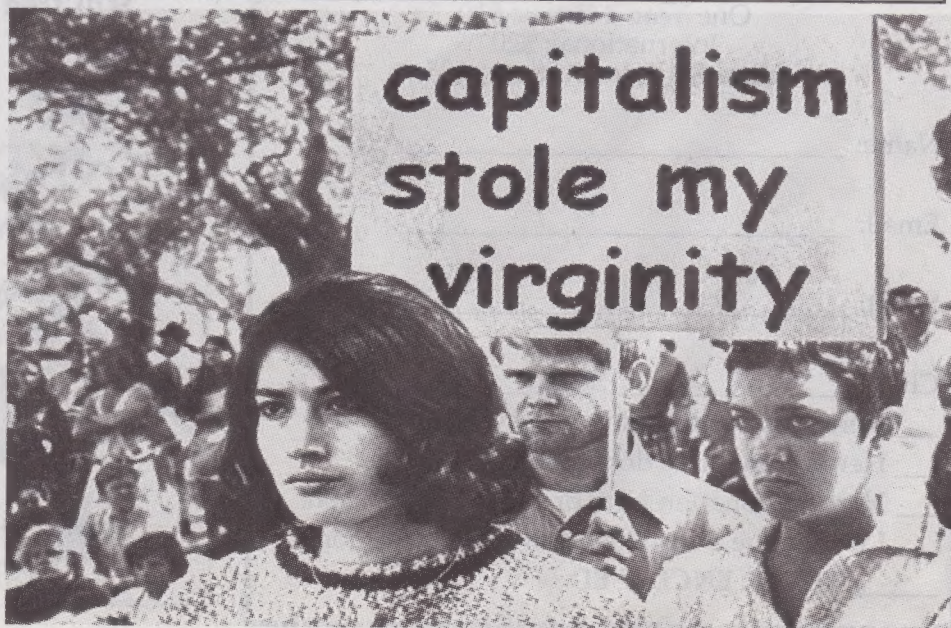
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In the last year, two of our contributors greeted new family members. The FE collective would like to welcome to the world Benjamin Franklin Chutchfield (born 4.15.2004) and Henry Eric Boyer (born 9.16.2004). Anarchy is natural, everything else is learned!



FIFTH ESTATE

Our planned 40th anniversary double issue will only be possible with your support. After we pay for the issue you're holding, we will begin our fundraising for 2005. Please do what you can to help by purchasing a subscription, making a donation, or ordering books from the Barn. Let us know if you would like to become a *Fifth Estate* sustainer.

Finally, you can make the next issue possible by joining our one-time-only advertising drive:

Fifth Estate Declassified Ads!
Help make the special edition possible; send us an announcement or greeting on the occasion of our 40th anniversary. \$1 per word.

Please send copy and checks to:

Fifth Estate
PO Box 6, Liberty, TN 37095

Throughout 2005, we will celebrate our anniversary by spreading the ideas of revolution that made us notorious to authority and noted by readers everywhere as a consistent, intelligent, and even humorous tool for change.

From the suburban Detroit home of a 17-year-old high school student in 1965, to a gritty, inner-city Cass Corridor basement with an ever-changing revolutionary collective to a remote Tennessee barn of the current communal and editorial core group, the *Fifth Estate* has remained what the FBI called a voice "supporting the cause of revolution everywhere."

The '60s Underground Press milieu that birthed the FE also boasted hundreds of publications collaborated in organizations like the Liberation News Service and Underground Press Syndicate. This amazing radical network managed weekly newspapers and a diverse distribution system decades before the Internet.

With the task of publishing an explicitly non-commercial and anti-authoritarian magazine comes the commitment of the writers, editors, and artists who contribute not for wages but as an expression of rebellion. We are part of the alternative media movement, countering dominant ideologies and the myth of objectivity, but we strive to do more through critical self-reflection and analysis.

When the anarchist movement revived itself for the Haymarket anniversary in 1986, FE was a primary forum for discussion and debate. A bridge between the '60s cultural revolution and today's global justice movement, the FE has both provoked and transcended the debates between warring activist factions. The distinctions between hippies and politicians then—or lifestyleists and militants today—crumble when we insist on merging the social and personal or the political and cultural in a vision of total liberation.

Fifth Estate seeks to distinguish itself through our commitment to visionary, nondogmatic, and activist-oriented content.

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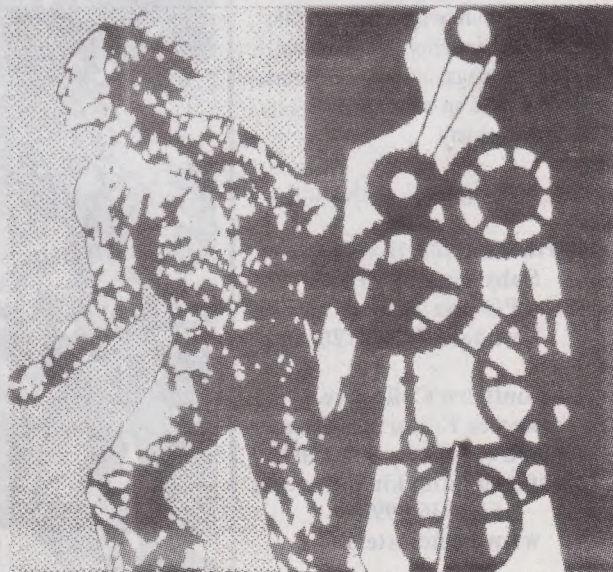
____ Here's a one-time donation.

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Still free to prisoners and GIs



post-election post-mortem

Four more years . . . of resistance!

It's finally over. Now we can get back to work. Over the last seven months a surprising number of our comrades were increasingly distracted by the seductive spectacle of humiliating Bush and Cheney on a grand scale. Anarchists I know, respect, and love voted, ferchrissakes, in their overwhelming desire to publicly rub Bush's nose in it. But in the back of their minds they all knew that a Kerry victory wouldn't change anything other than infinitesimally retard the atrocities, plunder, and human rights abuses carried out in the name of the USA.

So, other than the bitter tang of disappointment that some might now taste, nothing really changed. The only thing different that Wednesday morning if Kerry had won would have been that our mug of black coffee would have been slightly sweetened by the deep, delicious flavor of *schadenfreude*. But we would still be tirelessly organizing and plotting against the Empire. I'm not saying that it wouldn't've been great to see al-Jazeera network footage of resistance fighters in Fallujah celebrating a Bush defeat, but even if Kerry had won, the monstrous US offensive to reoccupy those thirty-five or forty insurrectionary cities in late November would have gone on as scheduled. At least now the war criminals and war profiteers who started this catastrophe will be on hand to personally reap their own whirlwinds.

So now that the Skull and Bones skullduggery of the presidential campaign is over, I urge all of us to get fired up, hunker down, and get on with the business of driving stakes through the hearts of these vampires. In addition to welcoming the voting anarchists back into the fold, it's also time to radicalize the already-unhappy left-progressives into more creatively radical positions. Let's welcome them all to our nightmare and make room for them here with us in the underground.

Don't waste one more minute bellyaching about disenfranchised votes or voting machine irregularities or the black-hole ignorance of the corporate mass media's lowest common denominator. Of course there was voter fraud—there's always been voter fraud and there always will be so long as folks continue to believe that ballots are synonymous with democratic self-rule. There's no need to mount some logical, reasoned arguments about Bush's lack of legitimacy. All governments are illegitimate and all States are rogue.

There are something like 200 million people who are (ostensibly) legally allowed to vote in the US; 59 million of those chose to openly support the Bush-Cheney regime. Statistically, then, there are still many

more of us than there is of them, especially on a global scale. But although we are in solidarity with the overwhelming majority, please remember that most of those 59 million people that I mentioned probably fear you or hate what you believe in. They are so afraid that they would do anything to make you think just like them or be forcibly made to shut up and get into line. Some of them would even cheer to see you killed for your beliefs, so sharpen your knives and look both ways before crossing the street.

We were right to stand up with the world against the Bush-Cheney regime a year ago, we were right to continue to do so all the way up to Monday, November 1, and, now, we're still right, if not more so.

Four more years! Of resistance! —Don LaCoss

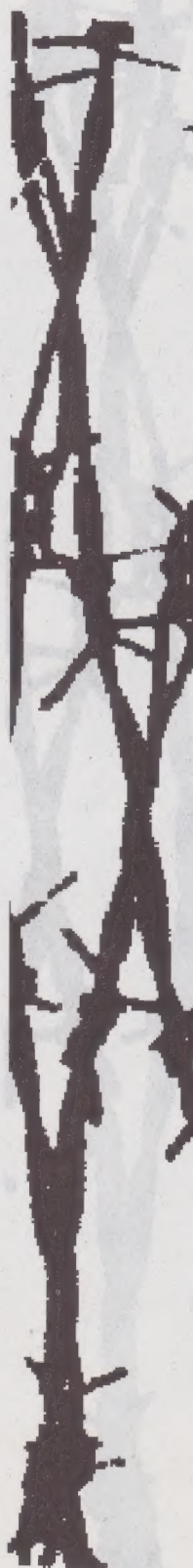
On November 2, 2004, which appropriately also happened to be the Day of the Dead, I did what I had not done since 1972: I voted for a candidate in an election. I intended only to vote against the regime in what had clearly become a national plebiscite on its legitimacy, policies, and war, but as a young liberal I know caustically reminded me, I had to vote *for* one politico in order to vote *against* the other.

So I pulled the lever for Kerry, and am neither embarrassed nor regretful. I knew that voting reflected political impotence, but that day it was clear I had an instrument of only one note, and I decided to play the note I had. I decided to carry out this innocuous act as an experiment.

It was also a gesture of community with the vast majority of my friends, neighbors, and family (including, as far as I could tell, a large majority of anarchists and other radicals) who had few or no illusions about the Democrats, but who saw it as almost a sacred obligation to let the world know they were saying no to that Mussolini rodent, Bush, and in particular to his invasion and bloody occupation of Iraq.

(I mean no offense to rodents, really, or to that fascist bastard Mussolini, for that matter, who at least was an actual war veteran who paid *some* dues, which my dad, a World War II vet who despised Bush as much as I do, and who died before having the pleasure of voting against him, reminded me. I voted for my dad; he always tolerated my abstentionism, even sympathized with it at times, but if he had still been alive, he would have smacked me with his cane if I hadn't voted this time.)

I also voted for Kerry despite the objections of a handful of friends and acquaintances working for Nader; they apparently had some trotskyist notion that a few thousand votes for their candidate and a couple of



converts to their party would mean more than participating in a significant social response to throw the bastards out come hell or high water.

Nader himself acknowledged there was some difference between a Republican and Democratic victory; he wasn't a candidate so much as an ego trip. I was more sympathetic to his running mate in 2000, Winona LaDuke, than to him, and this year, even she voted for Kerry.

I also admit to having had a small soft spot for Kerry because he had been an antiwar vet, and I thought it useful to send the message that the antiwar vets were right, or at least that Americans wouldn't reward the scum who vilified them. I think that was one of the things that started me following the campaign and considering going ahead and voting—just to stick it to the Swift Boat assholes.

Of course, though I was an active supporter of antiwar GIs and antiwar vets, the side I supported was the Vietnamese resistance, people like the Vietnamese guerrilla Kerry killed in that now notorious firefight, but he wasn't running for president in 2004, and he had almost as little chance of winning as Nader.

The symbolic power internationally of brooming Bush was undeniable; it meant at best an antiwar vote (and I think Kerry would have done better if he had run an explicitly antiwar campaign); at the very least a vote for Kerry was a vote of no confidence. I think radicals had nothing to lose by taking a few minutes to vote and something to gain from Bush's defeat. Even if Bush had lost, there would be further unprecedented catastrophe in Iraq and the Middle East generally.

I already argued in these pages after the 1992 elections that it is a mistake to treat electoral abstention as a rigid, reflexive dogma rather than as a flexible principle. In that article, I treated sympathetically a friend's desire to send Bush Daddy into retirement, especially given his crimes in Iraq, but I argued nevertheless for abstention, a refusal to participate in that spectacle. (See "Watching the Dogs Salivate: Notes on the 1992 Election," reprinted in *Against the Megamachine* available from the FE Barn.)

But twelve years of barbarism have made a difference. Junior and his cronies represent a greater disaster and higher stakes. Taking some wind out of their sails, at such little cost to ourselves, seemed reasonable to me. I wish we had more power to stop them, and ultimately, we may. But we didn't then, and we haven't lately.

As I said in my essay in 1992, I think abstention is a worthy orientation, but I think it a mistake to make a fetish of it. Two elections in recent memory may suffice to make my point. In 1988, Augusto Pinochet held a plebiscite to affirm his rule, but the Chilean people voted against him (about fifty-five percent, hardly a landslide), bringing about an end to fascist rule. To have

argued against voting at that moment would have been not only a terrible tactical mistake but also an insult to one's neighbors and to the victims of the regime. The Chileans didn't make a social revolution, but the consequences of their actions were serious and positive. Pinochet has not paid for his crimes, but he has not exactly lived a comfortable life since then, either.

In 1999, the people of east Timor voted overwhelmingly for independence, and subsequently suffered violence and massacres from the Indonesian military and gangs. And yet many testified afterward to having no regrets about voting. In Spain last spring, voting made a difference in throwing out Bush's conservative allies. My friends and comrades there went out and voted, and they tell me that the defeat of the right has opened up some paths and led to a new energy there.

We have always said that if voting made a difference, they would make it illegal; the voting fraud in 2000 and now again in 2004 suggests that this is what they are progressively doing. From the little I have read, anarchists supported the black freedom movement in the US in the 1950s and 1960s, remaining ambiguous (and probably ambivalent) about the voting question. I don't think there are simple answers to these questions.

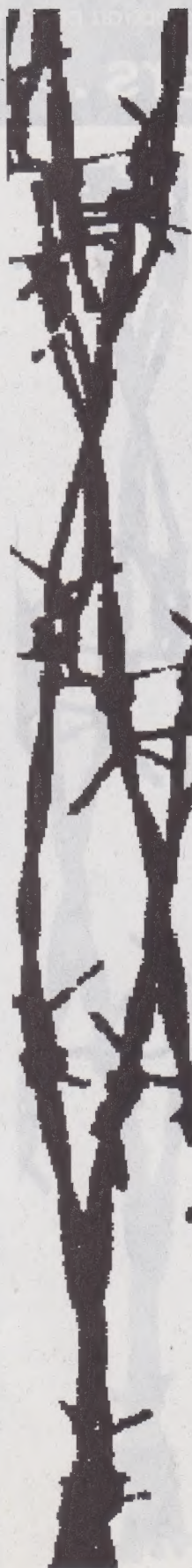
A Bush defeat would have meant that even a slim majority of Americans were willing to act on a symbolic level to reject the regime's crusade in the Middle East, its oligarchic dismantling of reforms and tattered safety nets that were already stunningly inadequate, its triggering of apocalypse in accordance with its christian messianism, its shredding of civil liberties, its hatred for woman's freedom, its refusal to live and let live with people of a different sexual orientation, its insistence that Vietnam was a noble cause betrayed by the antiwar movement.

Now that Kerry has lost (or stood by as the election was stolen), my conversations with coworkers and neighbors will be similar to what they would have been had he won.

The fascist fundamentalists are still out there, and because they won, they are more aggressive than ever. The war is killing thousands and making the world more dangerous for all of us. They are wrecking the planet. What now? The ruling parties will not save us. It is up to us to put an end to this, to create a new world. Voting won't do it.

I'll tell them what I told them before: OK, I tried your way on Tuesday, but whatever occurred on November 2, we need to think beyond those two minutes in the booth. What will you do today, next week, and for the rest of your life?

—David Watson



FALLING OFF THE WAGON: Chicago Memorializes Haymarket

The Haymarket Tragedy of 1886 has been remembered by anarchists, workers, labor organizers, and historians as a seminal event in humanity's ongoing fight for free speech, free assembly, and the abolition of wage slavery. Around the world, major cities have erected monuments and named plazas in honor of the Haymarket martyrs and the importance of their trial, but until September 14, 2004, no substantial marker had ever been erected where the incident occurred, near the corner of Randolph and Des Plaines in Chicago.

The monument which today sits at the site ambiguously represents several figures involved in the de/construction of a wagon which doubles as a speakers' platform. The concrete base features plaques explaining the Haymarket tale, leaving bare two sides for the future addition of plaques sent in solidarity (or perhaps to commemorate future massacres). The design was subject to approval by a collaborative board of city and state officials, the Chicago Police Department (CPD), and union bureaucrats; unsurprisingly, no anarchists or radicals of any kind were invited to participate in the planning of the monument itself.

Even less surprising was the absence of these voices at the unveiling of the monument. The keynote speaker at the dedication was Douglas Gannon, president of the Chicago Federation of Labor, who mispronounced the names of each of the eight men falsely indicted for the bombing. The thrust of his speech seemed to be that we have the Haymarket martyrs to thank for weekends and the eight-hour workday, but we need not remember that this was for them a step toward the abolition of wage slavery. This seemed to be what the entire event pointed to: looking at labor history with pious gratitude rather than as a fountain of inspiration and strength in our own actions.

Present in the crowd were members of the Illinois Labor History Society, an organization which has worked for

decades to preserve both working class history and to radicalize the contemporary labor movement, and one which has long been the major advocate of a proper Haymarket monument. Its founders, Les Orear and Molly West, could have provided some of the most critical and radical analyses of Haymarket and its significance today. Perhaps this is why they were excluded from the event—although Orear was given a

token minute to make an impromptu speech after the ceremony had officially closed and many had left.

A small anarchist contingent was present and vocal that day on Des Plaines, but sadly, the anarchists seemed just as lost on the significance of Haymarket as the bureaucrats. This radical bloc was there to protest and remind the assembled that those names in bronze once belonged to anarchists. Flyers were distributed quoting the martyrs on anarchy and asking, "Is it not complete hypocrisy to love the martyrs and hate their anarchism?"

While we need not dispute that statement, we should ask ourselves if it is not just as hypocritical to love their anarchism and yet learn nothing from the work they did. Parsons, Lingg, Spies, Engel, Neebe, Fischer, Schwab, and Fielden didn't spend their lives trying to convert workers to anarchism as though it were a kind of religion: they actively fought to change the world. They were not killed because they were

anarchists—they were killed because they were shockingly effective in mobilizing the disparate Chicagoans of their era to work together towards total liberation.

As anarchists, we must look at labor history to help shape our contemporary struggles, not simply to align ourselves with a radically fashionable cult of martyrdom. While we need not be grateful to the City of Chicago and the CPD for finally recognizing a site which should have been ritually marked many decades ago, we must not limit ourselves to playing the expected chorus of marginalized critique, trotted out as a free speech sideshow for the US Freedom Circus. Instead let's ask ourselves how to best utilize this space and this story in our creative revitalization of the struggle which the Haymarket anarchists epitomized.

—Ruth Opp & Raccoon Porch



graphic: Howard Besser anarchist t-shirt collection

First Iraq Mutiny:

As War Drags on, Will There Be More?

Mutiny. This word, fearsome to the brass of any army (but joyful to anti-war activists), was left out of October media accounts about a US Army Reserve unit whose soldiers refused to deliver fuel along a route in Iraq they considered too dangerous to travel.

Eighteen soldiers, including the commander of the 343rd Quartermaster Company, refused to undertake a fuel delivery north of Baghdad in what they characterized as a "suicide mission," given the frequency of attacks and the lack of armor for their unit. The commander was relieved of duty with the hope that the entire incident could be swept under a rug already showing great bulges from previous sweepings.

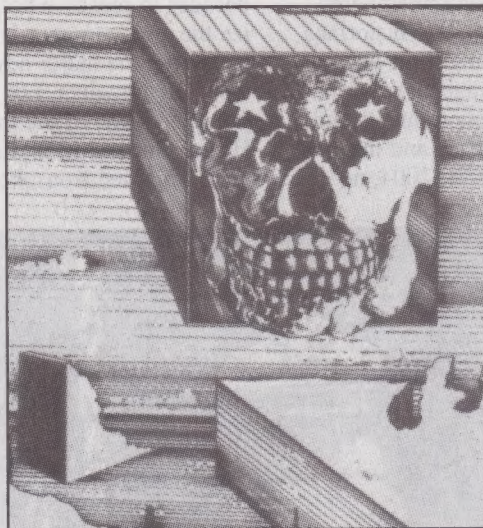
All armies depend on the unquestioning adherence to orders with no allowance made for individual or subordinate group objection. To do so, we are continually told, would jeopardize the command authority of any army. Military training stresses, perhaps even more than fighting skills, the necessity to take orders without hesitation. This is particularly acute in the US since all of its conflicts since World War II involved aggressive acts or imperial machinations.

Throughout the recent Iraq episode, the mutiny of the 343rd is routinely referred to as "mission refusal," so reluctant are the armed forces and their compliant corporate media to resurrect the specter of Vietnam, where such acts almost sunk the army. After insisting, "I will not be the first American president to preside over a losing war," war criminal Richard Nixon began a withdrawal; the U.S. military had to get out of Southeast Asia before imploding under the pressures of desertion and insubordination.

"Army in State Approaching Collapse"

By the late 1960s, the spirit of rebellion and insubordination of youth currents at home was no less present on the battlefields of Vietnam.

In a 1971 article under the ominous title, "The Collapse of the Armed Forces," *Detroit News* military analyst Col. Robert D. Heintz Jr. observed: "The morale, discipline, and battleworthiness of the U.S. Armed Forces are, with a few salient exceptions, lower and worse than at anytime in this century and possibly in the history of the United States. By every conceivable indicator, our army that now remains in Vietnam is in a state approaching collapse, with individual units avoiding or having refused combat, murdering their officers and non commis-



GIs need to know the history of mutinies when soldiers took matters into their own hands.

sioned officers, drug-ridden, and dispirited where not near mutinous."

US troops in Iraq are nowhere near that point today, but in the age of instant communication, the troops are well aware of the ongoing debate about the war at home, the lies Bush manufactured to justify it, and the massive expressions of anti-war sentiment. And they are apparently less than cowed.

One outspoken Florida National Guardsman, asked if he feared retaliation for criticisms of the war he made to an MSNBC reporter, labeling it a "quagmire," replied sarcastically, "What are they going to do, send me to Iraq?"

Another squad member, Sp/4 Jeremy Polston, an insurance broker from Lake Worth, Fla., said, "I have no idea why we're here."

The entire military command structure is comprised of Vietnam veterans or those who entered the armed forces just following that conflict when the military was in the shambles described by Col. Heintz. Today the brass worry what a further deterioration in Iraq would bring.

Massive Expression

Discontent is clearly high among combat troops, but complaints are most often about being restricted from battle, not having a clear sense of mission, or lack of proper equipment. Indiscipline is probably more widespread than reported by the mainstream press, but more of a crisis—military or political—will have to occur before Vietnam level refusals happen again. Still, AWOLs are at a twenty-year high; even more significant are the collective acts of National Guard units that clearly do not want to enter the fray in Iraq.

In September, at Fort Dix, N.J., 635 soldiers of a South Carolina National Guard battalion scheduled to depart for a year or more in Iraq spent their off-duty hours under a disciplinary lockdown in their barracks for two weeks. During the Labor Day weekend, 13 members of the 178th Field Artillery Regiment went AWOL, according to press reports.

Although desertion hasn't yet become a serious problem, several cases are reminiscent of the exodus of draft age men to Canada during the Vietnam war. Brandon Hughey, a former member of the U.S. Army, left the country rather than participate in a war he brands as an illegal act of aggression. He is currently fighting extradition in Canada to avoid being sent back to the States where he would face desertion charges. His web address is www.brandanhughey.com. Jeremy Hinzman also made the trip North after becoming persuaded by pacifist ideas. His site is www.jeremyhinzman.net.

These are two well known cases, but many Guardsmen sim-

ply don't show up for duty or disappear into the big cities or countryside.

One of the most publicized cases involves Staff Sgt. Camilo Mejia, who abandoned his unit in the middle of the war in one of the most dangerous parts of Iraq. Mejia told the *60 Minutes II* TV program in March that he went AWOL because he was morally opposed to a war that had killed or wounded nearly 4,000 US soldiers. (The figure is now closer to 10,000.) After several months in hiding, the former platoon leader was eventually tried and sentenced to one year in the brig.

Cannonfodder Who Think for Themselves

The armed might of the political state has no room for its cannonfodder to think for themselves. The convicted guardsman's decision to go AWOL did not sit well with Capt. Tad Warfel, who was Mejia's Florida National Guard commanding officer. "His [Mejia] duty's not to question myself or anybody higher than me," says Warfel. "His duty is to carry out the orders that I give him or his platoon leader gives him. We're not

paid in the military to form personal opinions or to doubt what our leaders say."

The conflict between a psychology of submission and one of individual freedom could not have been put more succinctly. Submit to those above you. Don't question authority. This is the ideology of the world we currently live in; to act differently is to challenge the entire ruling apparatus.

Well-meaning anti-war liberals often have bumper stickers on their cars stating, "Peace is Patriotic." Actually, peace is not patriotic; it's subversive of a culture and society that needs authority and war to maintain itself.

GIs need to know the history of mutinies where soldiers—from World War I to Vietnam—took matters into their own hands and refused to fight. Soldiers formed autonomous groups within their units to discuss what they are being ordered to do and broke with the murderous aphorism of "Ours is not to wonder why; ours is but to do or die."

Not this time: Not for oil; not for the imperial state. U.S. Out of Iraq and the Middle East NOW! —Walker Lane

How to Support Anti-War GIs

As Bush's Iraq quagmire begins to take on the same qualities as the war in Vietnam—fighting an insurgent population, mounting US casualties, increased slaughter of civilians, destruction of the country to "save it," no exit strategy—so, too, does military opposition.

A so far small but vocal group of ex-soldiers has formed Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW), echoing the larger Vietnam vet anti-war organization which in that era had a tremendous impact on public consciousness. Mike Hoffman, an ex-combat Marine from Pennsylvania quoted in the November-December edition of *Mother Jones* magazine, talked about some of the emotions which led him to take political action against the war.

"I came home and read that six children were killed in an artillery strike near where I was," he told the liberal magazine. "I don't really know if that was my unit or a British unit, but I feel responsible for everything that happened when I was there."

The IVAW have an opportunity to create the same impact as the group for which John Kerry was an eloquent spokesperson in his 1971 congressional testimony regarding US war crimes in Vietnam. This will become even more painfully the case as the war worsens and casualties mount. The group can be reached at www.ivaw.net.

Another group of Iraq war vets, Operation Truth, was founded by Paul Rieckhoff, a former 1st lieutenant, who served as an platoon leader in the 3rd Infantry and 1st Armored Divisions. They explain their mission as "educating the American public about the truth of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan from the perspective of the soldiers who have experienced them first-hand." They are online at www.optruth.org.

Also prominent in fighting the illegal U.S. war against Iraq are several groups comprised of military families with children or spouses in the conflict. These include Bring Them Home Now, the project of two anti-war organizations—Military Families Speak Out and Veterans for Peace—and has seen its mem-

bership soar to more than 700 families over the course of the war. They can be reached at www.mfso.org, www.bring-themhome.org, and www.veteransforpeace.org.

Sgt. Camilo Mejia, mentioned above, is being actively supported by Citizen Soldier, an anti-war, GI advocacy group, which has launched a campaign to free the imprisoned officer. A national coordinating committee met in early November near Ft. Sill, Oklahoma, where Mejia is imprisoned, to coordinate a national strategy to bring his case to public attention. Contact them at www.citizen-soldier.org.

Besides the two GIs who fled Canada mentioned in the article on this page, at least four others have sought similar refuge.

Draft dodging, deserting one's national army, and mutinies have all played historically honorable roles in resistance to war. Many immigrants to the US were fleeing forced conscription in the countries they left.

Blind obedience is to be reviled. Support GI resistance. Some people have questioned what to do next following Bush's election; supporting these courageous men and women is one thing we can do. —WL

Ex-Sgt. Camilo Mejia holding an anti-war sign in Iraq. After refusing to report for duty, he was sentenced to a year in jail.

The FE sends free subscriptions to GIs. During the Vietnam War thousands of soldiers read the paper in barracks, on board ships, and on the battlefield.





"Republicanismo" by Richard Mock

MY TALE OF ZERO TOLERANCE

I was in New York during the Republican convention, mostly staying as far as possible from Madison Square Garden, but greatly enjoying the joyous spirit of counter-cultural expression that filled the city simultaneous with the Republican invasion.

On August 31, 2004, I went to participate in a "green bloc" action called "true security," with the theme of creative representations of a better world. The meeting place was the steps of the public library on 42nd Street and 5th Avenue. I arrived early and sat on the steps reading. Those library steps epitomize public space and free speech and have served for generations as a meeting place.

Not far from where I sat, a guy started to hang a banner from

one of the lions that flank the library steps like mascot icons. Police were there within seconds and physically stopped him. They told him he couldn't hang the banner, and he cooperated, instead holding the banner with another person. However, that wasn't good enough. Evidently in New York these days it is illegal to display banners, a threat to homeland security. The police abruptly grabbed the two banner-holders, locked their arms behind their backs, and placed them under arrest. People sitting on the steps reacted by surrounding them and chanting "Let Them Go." Riot police moved toward the assembled crowd. It was a very tense moment.

I backed away, firm in my resolve to avoid arrest. In the ensuing chaos there were more arrests and the police cleared the library steps. I tried to blend into the rush-hour pedestrian traffic, while staying nearby. I couldn't quite believe that the

library steps were being so gratuitously profaned by riot police; what more appropriate (and innocuous) place could there be to unfurl banners and offer soapbox harangues? As the police presence grew and vans and busses for mass arrests arrived, I melted into the pedestrian mass and walked downtown through streets more heavily policed and even militarized than I have ever experienced. Security trumped freedom on the streets of my beloved city.

As I passed Union Square, I heard a marching band and saw a ragtag parade dancing its way uptown. I saw an old friend in it and joined him following the parade. In contrast to many protest events, this was fun, festive, and light. Not for long. A line of riot-gear police forced the parade off the avenue onto 16th Street. Then at the other end of 16th Street another line of police appeared. I got off the street and onto the sidewalk, wishing to avoid confrontation with police. Police were approaching from both sides, and started grabbing and arresting the musicians, videographers and photographers, and select individuals from out of the crowd. The sidewalks were packed as the police moved closer, not allowing anyone to leave. We were contained by orange netting. All the people on the street, including random folks with nothing to do with the parade, were prisoners of the police.

The police grabbed some people standing near me, folks with slogan tee-shirts and extreme hair, so I moved away toward folks who appeared more mainstream. We were sandwiched between two lines of police telling us to move back, with nowhere to go. Finally we sat down and waited, as they continued to select individuals to arrest.

I made friends with a few people immediately around me. We talked about our absurd uncertain situation and how we came to be in it. We didn't know whether we would be arrested, but we were not free to leave. We were prisoners. We communicated with friends and family via our cellphones. Eventually we were told that we would all be arrested, and they divvied us up, gender-segregated, five to an officer. My cop was Officer Harrigan. He searched us, bound our hands behind our backs us with plastic handcuffs, took our names and addresses, and we waited.

After an hour or so, we were led to a city bus. The mood was jovial and we channeled nervous energy into laughter. Some energetic souls engaged police officers in bantering political dialogue, and we all sang cheesy songs like "Why Can't We Be Friends?"

Guantanamo-on-the-Hudson

We were taken to pier 57, on the Hudson river, a municipal vehicular maintenance facility converted (by the Republican National Committee, as it turns out) into a mass arrest detention center, known now as "Guantanamo-on-the-Hudson." The concrete floor was filthy with decades of accumulated spillage of diesel fuel, motor oil, and who knows what other toxic chemicals. It made everybody's clothes and skin filthy, and some sensitive individuals suffered terrible rashes. An investigation is underway into whether the paneling in the space is asbestos.

We were paraded before large cages filled with hundreds of people already in custody from other protest-related mass arrests. They cheered as we walked by. We were placed in a huge cell, with no furniture whatsoever, grimy filthy floors, surrounded by 16 foot fencing topped with razor wire. The cell was continuously filling for hours with people arrested not only

on 16th Street but also around Herald Square and Ground Zero.

I wandered around the detention room talking to people. Everybody was friendly and interesting. There was a strong spirit of camaraderie, as adversity so often generates. Most of us were tired and subdued, but in the center of the room, a spirited drumming circle developed, using the plastic handcuffs, now off our wrists, as percussion instruments.

Shortly after daylight I was part of a group transferred to the tombs, the notorious Manhattan central booking facility beneath the criminal court building. We were rehandcuffed, this time much tighter, and taken to a corrections department van fitted with several different cage compartments. The corrections officer who drove us through lower Manhattan at 7:00 am treated us like the caged animals we were.

Down in the tombs we were constantly on the move, sitting and waiting in perhaps 6 different cells over the course of about 12 hours. Each time we would become familiar with a group of fellow inmates, we would be reshuffled. In one cell I ran into Ryan, a guy I had met at a party in Murfreesboro a few weeks before. How unlikely is that? Ryan was tackled by a police officer in his arrest. His face was a collage of band-aids, and his front teeth were broken.

We were moved in groups of 5-12 in chain-linked handcuffs. We'd lean up against a wall in a corridor in a line together, and sit down on the floor or get up in unison. Between cells we stopped for photographs, various cursory informational interviews, and fingerprints, with an instant-gratification imaging machine attached no doubt to some massive database. It was a bit like a board game, in which we knew eventually we were headed out of jail, but everyone's roll of the dice and the arbitrary cards they pull are a little different. Sometimes people that came into a given location last would be moved first, and the first last. Some people got out in 12 hours; the last were released after 60 hours and a court order. I was held for about 24 hours.

I was released around 5 pm. Support allies greeted us with cheers, hugs, food, drink, phones, and legal information. I was never arraigned; never saw a judge or even a lawyer. I was released with a desk appearance ticket, requiring me to appear in court at a later date. I am charged with disorderly conduct for consorting with an unauthorized gathering of people.

I hate being locked up. I didn't choose to be arrested, as I have done several times in my life. Back in the day, the New York police routinely warned peaceful demonstrators to move before placing them under arrest. That was back before dissent was a threat to national security, when it was understood as the freedom to disagree.

The new tactic of preemptive mass arrests is chilling. Many of the people I talked to behind bars were random bystanders who simply had the misfortune of being in the wrong place at the wrong time. I met a pair of 16 year old boys from the Bronx who had just done their back-to-school shopping at Macy's when they got caught in the net. They were not activist-identified in the least, but they've certainly been radicalized by their wrongful detention.

I've been radicalized, too. For me it's about public space and methods of social control. In a world where property ownership is god and real estate determines culture, public space is precious. That is where people can congregate without some specific authorized purpose. Do we want to live in a world where we need permission to gather? I sure don't.

—Sandor Ellix Katz

Resistance is possible



—On A29, the legendary anarchist collective Living Theater performs the "Code Orange Cantata" in the streets. Photo by Sunfrog.

The Republican National Convention (RNC) was the ultimate slight to New York: those who made careers and a quick buck off the September 11th events returned to feast like vultures on the corpses of the dead, attempting to rally support for a failing war and a disastrous regime by parading around near the site of Ground Zero.

The RNC 2004 protests showed that resistance is possible in this country quickly sliding towards old-fashioned homeland fascism: a vast multitude of people are getting ready to roll against the corporate aristocracy that runs this country. Popular hatred against the government, particularly as symbolized by its leading figurehead George W Bush, was at an all-time high. In New York City, during the months preceding the RNC, Republicans not only lacked support but were openly hated.

The Protest that Never Sleeps

The protests began in earnest on Thursday, August 26 and lasted for a week. On Friday night, the largest Critical Mass in NYC history seized the street in defiance of the terrifying environmental costs of this oil-driven civilization. Over five thousand bikers of all stripes and colors seized the streets for two hours, fouling up traffic in Manhattan and generally humiliating the police, who have never been able to control Critical Mass in NYC.

On Sunday, the United For Peace & Justice march slowly but surely gathered in the streets. The "Don't Just Vote, Get Active" campaign called for a "Unified Direct Democracy and Direct Action" contingent to deliver "a radical message to what otherwise might be a reformist event." Gathering the Rhythm Workers Union and the Infernal Noise Brigade, the Pagans and the Greens, colorful hippies and black-clad anarcho-punks, pink-clad musicians and radical cheerleaders, this amalgamation grew into one of the largest and most festive contingents in the entire march.

A huge Green Dragon of Self-Determination led the entire contingent, taking up almost an entire block. A small group of people with strange signs urging people to "disassemble the totality of power," holding black umbrellas to hide themselves from the ever-present cameras filming on the tops of buildings, gathered behind the dragon. Others danced in front of the dragon, and the march seemed to be riding a crest of sheer joy as it approached Madison Square Garden, where the convention was to be held.

At this juncture, right in front of the convention center, the sound system of the dragon finally ran out of batteries. In this opening, the Pagans began their inspiring Spiral Dance, and then, as Starhawk of the pagan cluster wrote, she felt "some powerful earth energy, a kind of raw life force that pulsed and thundered and rose up into a great, focused cone of power.

Someone told me to look behind, and in the relatively empty space between us and the line of cops at 34th St., the dragon was burning." The Green Dragon had burst into flames. Police retreated behind their barricades, and then gathered forces and began arresting people at random. A spontaneous Black Bloc appeared, defending themselves from the attacking police by throwing bottles as the flames raged behind them.

To this day, no one knows exactly why the Green Dragon went up in smoke. I was dancing relatively near it and have no idea if it was a malfunction, a Pagan spell, an undercover Black Bloc using the Green Dragon as a Trojan Horse, or just some random act of madness. Regardless, in this downright surreal course of events, it became clear to me as the crowd fought back against the police assault that at least some people were bored of marching around aimlessly in circles and wanted to take militant direct action against the powers of the State. At one point, the cops even retreated from the crowd.

After the march, many anarchists and other angry citizens who weren't already at Broadway went there to participate in the "Chaos on Broadway" and "Mouse Bloc" actions. This is where another phase in direct action began, one that fit almost perfectly the personality of New York City: small groups followed Republican delegates around New York and made their lives a living hell by being as rude as possible to them. On Broadway, I was greeted by an amazing sight: hundreds of protesters gathering in both large clumps and small clusters, undercover cops everywhere but seemingly unable to do anything, hundreds of ordinary tourists wandering about, and the cops generally losing control of the situation.

Generally, the rule seemed to be that groups of protesters who were wearing bandannas, holding up anti-Bush banners, or dressing in even more black than is usual in New York City, were targeted by the police and arrested as soon as they attempted to do anything even mildly illegal. However, many protesters were dressed for the occasion, easily blending into the constant stream of tourists on Broadway. The cops were unable to arrest everybody, as the Republicans, protesters, and unsuspecting people passing by were mixed together. The protesters appeared as if by magic just where the Republicans were, as the Republicans could be easily identified by their blue tuxedos and red badges, as well as their pasty all-white faces and the gleam of greed and religious fundamentalism in their eyes.

The organizational backbone of the whole event was the text messaging txtmob.org set up by the Institute for Applied Autonomy. A network is only as powerful as its communications. Tactical information about the location of the police and the Republican delegates was sent out to hundreds of small groups of protesters, who used the information to gather and disperse quickly. It was the second coming of smart mobs, a fading trend given new life by a political objective.

It was definitely not a pleasant night out on the town for the would-be masters of the universe. The arrogance of the Republican delegates was shocking: most of them didn't even have security or bodyguards, because of Iraq. Everywhere the delegates went there were both peace signs and fingers in the

air, and the promise of "RNC Not Welcome" fulfilled itself, lasting hours until the cops finally managed to arrest several hundred people and the remaining protesters left tired but smiling.

The direct action plans for Tuesday originated as some strange plan for a coordinated primal scream. When I went to one of the planning spokescouncil meetings, they were passing around a flower to denote who was given the floor to speak. While I understand there are cultural differences between the East and West Coast, I somehow had difficulty imagining actual New Yorkers in that meeting.

Still, when the day of action on Tuesday actually took place, it was impressive. Using the same text-messaging techniques employed successfully in the Broadway actions, large masses of people attempted to block intersections and hassle delegates, bringing large parts of Manhattan to a standstill. The police responded by arresting as many people as they could, as quickly as possible, with little regard to what they were actually doing or if any laws were being broken.

At one point cops surrounded me and a friend with the dreaded orange netting. The orange netting was more of a psychological barrier than a physical one: riled up crowds sometimes broke through it. However, most of the crowd I was with didn't even seem to notice that they were about to be mass-arrested. I walked calmly up to a cop, stared him straight in the eye, and said "You are not arresting me. I'm not a protester. Let me go." The Jedi mind trick worked, and the cop meekly opened up the orange netting to let me and my friend out. Reports kept flooding in that people were sitting in the streets blocking traffic, and groups like the TrueSecurity Cluster did in fact seize a block occasionally.

There's a Song Beneath the Concrete

If anything, the RNC protests showed that domestic dissent is alive and well in the United States in the face of the creeping fascism of the Bush regime. This happened against overwhelming odds and broke a spell of several years of bad luck. As anarchists, it's not our job to lead by giving commands. We lead by being an inspiring example, and the RNC was an example. We need more heroic examples to show that resistance is possible. We anarchists seek not to represent the people, for we know people can only represent themselves.

We're not superheroes, but ordinary people, dirty and tired, weary yet still smiling, toiling away at mind-numbing drudgery and acting with unbelievable heroism for the dignity of life. We all have the courage we need within us. We can feel it in our bones and in the soil. As Aresh and the folks working in the community gardens in the Bronx know all too well, the soil is still rich and fertile beneath the concrete skyscrapers of New York. All that is required is that we have the courage to break open the concrete. And in New York, I could almost hear the concrete breaking. —Alexander Trocchi, CrimethInc. International News Agent Provocateur

For a much longer version of this piece, please visit:
www.mcnotwelcome.org/mcredud.html

By Spencer Sunshine

I must admit, I was both wary and excited to attend the fourth annual Renewing the Anarchist Tradition (RAT) conference on September 24-26th in Plainfield, Vermont. I had not attended an anarchist "gathering" or conference in many years, and in the best of cases, had serious reservations. Images of a sectarian version of a pagan gathering or science fiction convention—or of cliquey über-activist event—both danced in my head.

Additionally, this particular event was co-sponsored by the Institute for Anarchist Studies (IAS) and the Institute for Social Ecology (ISE), which is best known for its co-founder Murray Bookchin.

Although now retired, Bookchin's influence and reputation looms large over the school, which is the only degree-granting anarchist-affiliated institution in the US. Bookchin influenced generations of anarchists by championing the conjunction of environmentalism and anarchism starting in the 1960s, but later devolved into nasty sectarian battles with those closest to his political views. The IAS, a much-needed institution which gives out grants for anarchist scholarship, is not affiliated with the ISE, but there is overlap between its board and the school.

Trepidation to the Wind

However, my experiences with ISE folks in New York City had actually been quite good. Despite some abstract philosophical differences, they are committed both to a pro-intellectual stance (something sorely lacking in most of the anarchist milieu) as well as to a democratic, pluralistic politic—unlike the many "federated" anarchist groups which come and go with their marxist-style lines laid out in advance about "who the revolutionary class is which will overthrow capitalism." Casting my trepidation to the wind, we packed up a couple cars full of anarcho-intellectuals and headed north.

I must say the conference actually ended up being *fun*—which was the last thing expected. This year there were about 200 attendees, the largest so far, and 40 panels and presentations, which ran from Friday night to Sunday afternoon. With dreads and patches being the exception rather than the rule (sign of a cultural change in the anarchist movement, or just the age of participants?), people were both friendly and on-the-ball.

It felt taken for granted that not just were people theoreti-



Action & Ideas at Vermont RAT Conference

cally conversant, but that they were involved in the on-the-ground activist struggles—a refreshing change from endless discussions with timid leftist academics who've rarely ventured forth beyond a permitted anti-war protest; and also a welcome break from the run-of-the-mill activist "report-backs" and endless strategy and tactics talks, which one can attend any day of the week in NYC.

In fact, the main problem with the conference was: which panel to see?

Was it really fair to book "Carnival Against Capital: The Radical Subjectivity of Andre Breton and Georges Bataille" in the same time slot as a panel on "Poststructuralism and Anarchism"? Or, "Freedom Suites: Post-Bop Jazz, R&B, and the Anti-authoritarian Imagination" vs. "A Renaissance of Specters: Autonomism and Anarchism?"

How about "Art and Anarchism" vs. "Fashion and Anarchism"—which would you choose?

"Flagging, Fornicating, Fourier"

For those less theoretically inclined, there were many nuts-and-bolts panels on topics such as dual power, the relationship of anarchists to anti-imperialist struggles, and student organizing. Fortunately, everyone I stiffed can get my attention later, as all of the panels and presentations will be put online in MP3 formats (check in at homemadejam.org/renew for information as it becomes available).

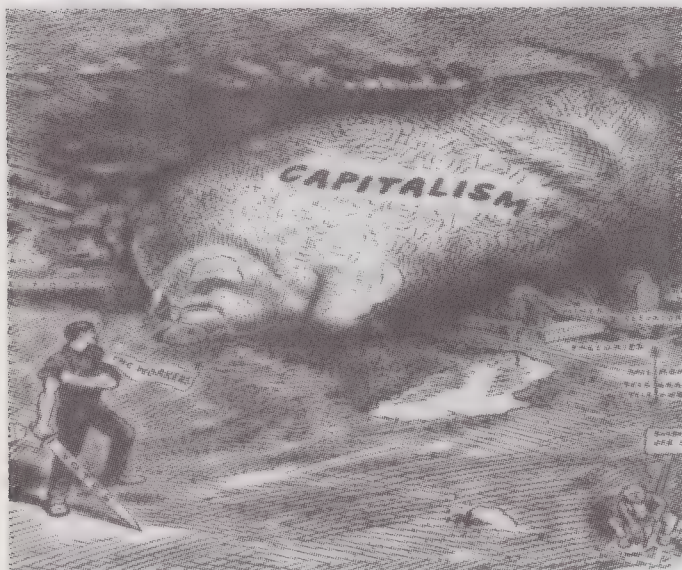
Myself, I'm looking forward to getting to listen to presentations such as "Flagging, Fornicating and Fourier: Emma Goldman's Glimpse into the Limitless World of Sexual Harmony," "American Anarchism and the Russian Revolution," and "Anarchist Cultural Challenges to the Field of Power."

As a last note, yes, the demographic of the conference was what you'd expect it to be—quite white, and overwhelmingly male. (On the other hand, I walked into a philosophy class the next week and realized how diverse RAT was in comparison). The RAT organizers loudly encouraged people of color, women and queer folks to attend—much to the consternation of some anarcho-curmudgeons—and certainly some did.

Perhaps the demographic has more to do with anarchists tending to turn towards intellectual work at older ages, and therefore the more intellectual segments being representative of an older generation, which was more homogenous than the movement is now. In any event, I think we will see a demographic shift in the near future.

"I don't believe in charity. I believe in solidarity. Charity is so vertical. It goes from the top to the bottom. Solidarity is horizontal. It respects the other person and learns from the other. I have a lot to learn from other people." —Eduardo Galeano

On Class & Solidarity: an introduction to economy & community



The following economy and community section deals at least as much with our visions for different and possibly better realities as it does with our critique of the current and devastating situations within capitalist economic relations. However, we can and should note that the statistics concerning global wealth and poverty are staggering. The elite classes experience unprecedented luxuries while the rest of the world struggles. The working class slips into disastrous debt and the underclass teeters toward catastrophic hunger, disease, and poverty.

Of capitalism's numerous crimes, perhaps the greatest is the creation of starvation in a world of abundance and the institutionalization of a permanent underclass. (There are many sources to further study stunning and upsetting trends; for one example, several of us have recently read Mike Davis's "Planet of the Slums" in *New Left Review*, which provides a pungent survey of the problems confronting us.)

The editorial collective members who produce this magazine come from varying class backgrounds, but as North Americans, we currently live mostly middle-class lives, especially in contrast with much of the global south. Whether we are workers or voluntarily underemployed, we share the class-consciousness that unites us all in international antagonism against the rulers. The radical economic proposals we endorse in this journal would not only render the concept of class obsolete but would destroy the ruling class apparatus, thus making all economic oppression impossible. In fact, we advocate not a new economy but a new world beyond economy, beyond barter, beyond exchange.

But in lieu of radical and utopian revolutionary transformation, how do we live from day to day? Can we be

honest about the contradictions and compromises that confront those attempting to live our radical ethics? How do we address the vast class inequities that face our communities, the continent, and the world? Certainly, we can call for class war, but how does that manifest itself?

If we openly recognize the limited nature of today's possible activities and choose those most suited to our values, we need not scoff at or diminish the endeavors of others but recognize that certain steps are necessary to maintain our integrity and humanity in these horrific times.

Voluntary poverty has a vast tradition in the radical subcultures of North America. Permanent or temporary decisions to consume less and live more may have modest impact on others but are often the first step to unlearning class-based bias and neurotic dependence on the alleged necessities of civilized living.

Communal living remains a challenging but exemplary activity for us. As much about a radical commitment to emotional honesty and anti-authoritarian psychology as it is about shared resources, the collective remains a model laboratory for testing new ways of interaction and action.

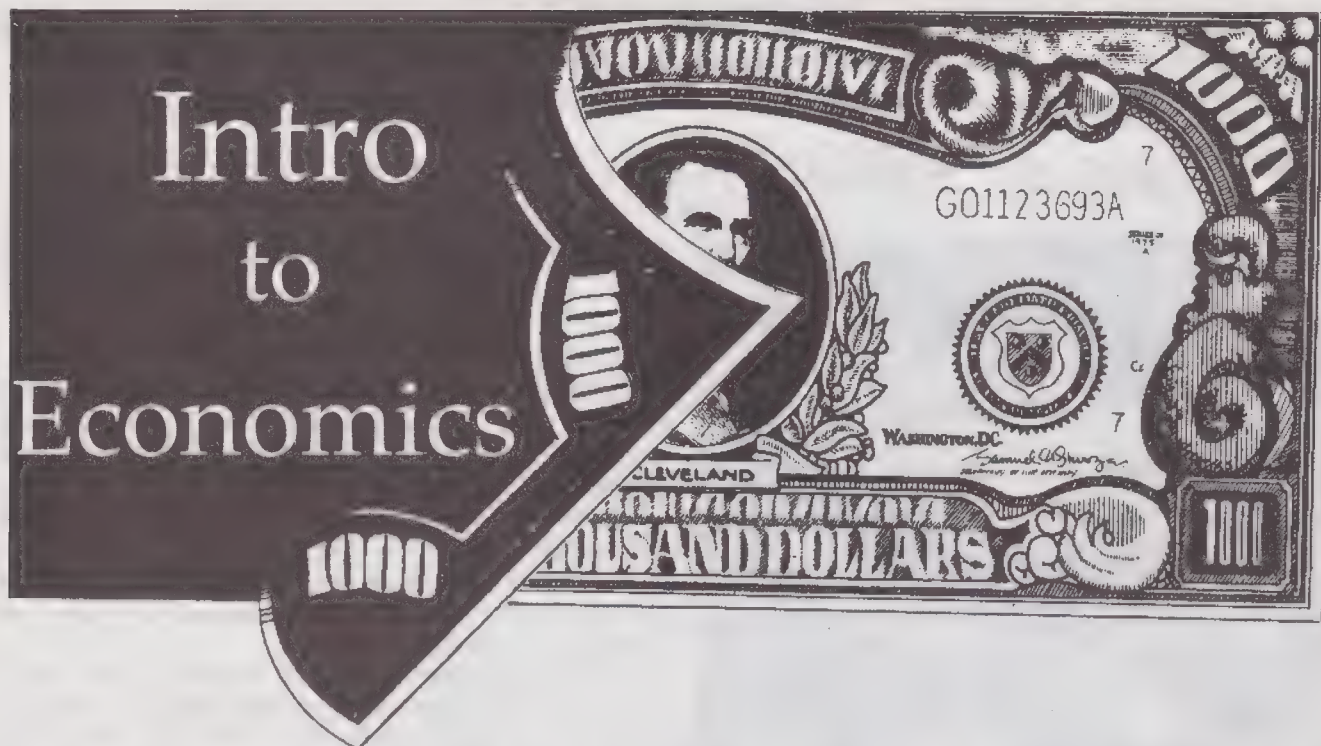
Many anarchists today have experience in organizing worker collectives and co-ops, building counter-institutions, or participating in existing unions. All of these activities have reformist aspects and social limits, but within the context of surviving in this society, these gestures can often make wage work and daily life less humiliating.

North American radicals always need to look past the confines that race and class impose on our lives. We need to seek alliances beyond our narrow milieu. We also need to understand that one-time acts of symbolic charity are not the same as chiseling out acts of sustainable solidarity.

Last year, several church-type charities went to rescue the residents of a homeless encampment, a brambly backwater hideout on the edges of Murfreesboro, TN. Despite the generous offer of temporary homes and part-time jobs, the residents of the tent village refused the charity. Giving several reasons, among them the prerogative of the campers to drink whiskey and fornicate at will.

So vast is the social poverty of suburban piety that poor folk in North America will choose an outsider life of quite marginal freedoms over the phony security of minimum wage servitude. Our revolutionary aspirations need to understand this imperative human hunger for a life more meaningful than mere handouts and food could ever provide.

— Sunfrog



This is the story about how I got a C- grade in my high school economics class. Mr. Burns told the class on the first day that we were going to spend all of our time playing the "Stock Market Game."

We were given an imaginary lump sum of \$10,000 at the beginning of September and our assignment was to invest it in stocks. We read the financial page of the local newspaper at the beginning of every class and compared notes from cable television financial news programs to track our make-believe investments. Mr. Burns said that the highest grade would go to the three people who made the most money in the class. Extra points would be given to those whose stock value had the greatest increase.

As part of our assignment, we had to write to companies that we were planning to invest in and ask them for promotional material. When I suggested that the in-house company propaganda might be written so that it suckered in potential investors, Mr. Burns interrupted me and said that companies that deceived stockholders could not survive for very long. The Free Market insured honesty.

When the boss of a local manufacturing plant came in to cheerfully tell us why closing the factory and sending the work to Mexico was good for the economy, I asked Mr. Burns if we could get one of the foremen who got laid off to come in and tell us his perspective. When the head of a temp agency gave us a presentation on part-time contract workers, I suggested that we also get a labor union organizer to talk to the class.

One day, I asked why we only read the stock quotes on financial page of the newspaper in class: the WTO meeting in Seattle was at the end of the month, and I thought that we should be discussing globalization and corporate crime. But Mr. Burns said only that the Free Market would never tolerate

harmful economic practices or big business crooks because it was bad for business. The Free Market would also make sure that only honorable people did well in business.

One morning, I finally spoke my mind.

"Mr. Burns, why is capitalism the only thing we study in this class?"

Mr. Burns sounded like he was about to lose his temper with me. "Because this is an economics class. The Free Market is the only economic system in the world today and the only one that will ever work. It is important that you learn about that right now if you ever hope to succeed in life."

In my final report to the class, I explained that I lost almost all the money that I had had started out with in my investment portfolio. The biodiesel research company in Nebraska went bankrupt, as did the wind-turbine manufacturer, and my investments in them disappeared. In the end, I sold a lot of my stock and said that I donated the money to organizations that fought for economic justice and against poverty. I gave my last imaginary \$500 to an afterschool program in the neighborhood that wanted to teach kids how to swim.

Mr. Burns told me that he gave me a C- for the class because I never made an effort to understand the assignment.

For the last four years since graduation, I've worked part-time afternoons and weekends for \$7.50 an hour teaching neighborhood kids how to swim.

—Tabatha Static

LAST EXIT TO UTOPIA

by Takver Shevek

"In view of the solutions that are asked of us, routine completely re-upholstered in velvet is dangerous. Routine hatches more distress and death than an imaginary utopia."—André Breton

Green Anarchy #17 (Summer 2004) featured a rather amorphous seven-page article by one A Morefus as to why utopianism and anarchy are fundamentally incompatible. The author criticizes the totalizing impulses of utopian thought with a totalizing critique that glibly and thinly covers a few thousand years, from Plato's Republic and the Shakers to the Bauhaus, the Third Reich, anarcho-primitivism, and post-human cybertopias.

While the motivations for writing the piece are completely understandable—namely, worries about how utopian thinking promotes the achievement of "perfect societies" through the implementation of viciously authoritarian paradigms of control—the author overlooks the most vital and valuable aspects of utopian projects in a rush to promote that most idealistic of intellectual exercises, nihilism, as a "healthy influence" for anarchic communities.

Green Anarchy's narrow read on the utopic future fails to recognize that the closed, static, inhuman machinery of the blueprint is only what appears in the most simple, literal and fundamentalist of readings. This kneejerk anti-utopianism renders all utopians into political engineers in the tradition of VI Lenin and Paul Wolfowitz, ignoring that utopia is fiction and even the most totalitarian, coercive, and conformist utopian texts can be critically read in order to spark the sheet lightning of previously unimaginable and radical libertarian possibilities. Really, no anarchist would make the mistake to read a science-fiction novel as a carefully-calculated recipe for life after the Revolution. We are inspired by imaginal works; we would never completely mimic the worlds described in Fourier's *Theory of the Four Movements*, Pannekoeck's *Workers' Councils*, Ursula LeGuin's *The Dispossessed*, Ernest Callenbach's *Ecotopia*, Starhawk's *Fifth Sacred Thing*, Katsuhiro Omoto's *Akira*, or P M's *bolo'bolo*.

Aside from providing trenchant social commentary on contemporary life, what's most important about utopianism are not its strict ideological templates, but rather its poetic verve and audacity: "Utopias have often been plans of societies functioning mechanically, dead structures conceived by economists, politicians and moralists," anarchist Marie-Louise Berneri wrote, "but they have also been the living dreams of poets." Tom Moylan, in *Demand the Impossible: Science Fiction and the Utopian Imagination* (1986), spells it out this way: "Utopias help sustain us after long meetings and political defeats. They help to provoke our imaginations as we work out new strategies to meet our needs and desires. They challenge us to play with alternatives and thereby break out of the ideological chains that have restrained our socialized imaginations." Utopian works are a form of critical play that can be used as a sharp tool for stirring up radical change.

To that end, especially invigorating about utopian thought and creation is the absolute refusal to resignedly accept extant political conditions as inevitable, incontrovertible, and natural. Above all else, utopians reject miserabilist edicts about what is and is not realistic; utopians distrust practicality and pragmatism; utopians ignore the unfreedoms of efficiency, instrumental reason, and usefulness; utopians refuse the fruits from the poisonous tree of a puritanical Protestant work ethic and instead dance with the serpents of heresy and desire. To approach utopian projects solely as literal, one-way, single-path prescriptions for social organization is to miss the point. Utopias are not political science; utopias are political science-fiction.

As dark as the contemporary civilized dystopia is, we should continually and unapologetically challenge more people in our communities and our milieu to explore and embrace the utopian urge rather than to squelch it as was so summarily done in the pages of *Green Anarchy*. Utopia and anarchy are not incompatible—in fact, despite some arguments to the contrary, each borrows from the other in the name of harmony, ecstasy, and liberty.

Political economy, perennial economy: Marx, Thoreau, and Us

by David Watson

From July 1845 to September 1847, Thoreau lived at Walden Pond outside of Concord in a small cabin he built largely from scrap. Uninformed cynics typically criticize him either for staying close to town instead of seeking authentic wilderness—or for staying in the cabin only briefly; Thoreau himself made no great claims for his experiment, as he called it, explaining that he was attempting to “live deliberately,” to explore himself, to turn his attention to the woods. (In his essay, “Walking,” he also says that he prefers a kind of “border life” at the boundary between civilization and wilderness). Thoreau finished *Walden* after returning from the woods to embark on the “other lives” he said he still needed to live.

Around the same time, Marx and Engels met and decided to collaborate. Marx penned his *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* in 1844; Engels wrote *The Condition of the Working Classes in England* in 1845.

My discovery of Marx as a teenager a century and a quarter later led me to a life of radical activism for freedom and justice. After years as a socialist, I rejected marxism for an anti-capitalist anarchism still deeply imbued with Marx’s critique of capitalist alienation, the commodity, and class society, a perspective that continues to shape my response to the world today.

In my twenties, I read and considered Emerson a naive, occasionally charming, and often annoying petit bourgeois idealist, and had only glanced at Thoreau. In the early to mid-1980s, radical ecology and critical texts on technology gradually led me to transcendentalism. When I read *Walden*, Thoreau’s essays, and selections from his journals for the first time in the 1980s and early 1990s, a new world opened up to me. This was an anti-capitalism of a different sort—not a radical political economy but perhaps an anti-political economy.

As time has gone by, I find myself going back to Marx to examine what seems to be a series of brilliant errors. I read with Marx and against him, in a counter-current to his work. There are moments when I stand with him, of course—relentless search beneath appearance and illusion, his elegant dialectic of inversion and antithesis, his descriptions of the bloody disasters of class society, of the foibles of human beings making their history as history makes them, of history as irony, tragedy, and farce (including the ironies, tragedies, and farces of marxism).

Despite Thoreau’s occasional moments of petulance that incline one to wince—where, for example, this diffident bachelor trains his Yankee asperity on women, who remained for him a melancholy

mystery—I go to Thoreau for renewal, to slake a thirst. I read *with* Thoreau; returning to him regularly, as he might say, not for facts but for truths, not to read the times but the eternities. His observations of wild nature, his piercing humor, his wild and impossibly beautiful paradoxes, his crazy wisdom never cease to remind me of what seems an almost forgotten way to read the times. His subtle simplicity and obscure clarity put all scholastic complexities to shame. He puts my own hesitations and cowardly submissions to shame.

Marx’s opus from the beginning is a paean to work, to *homo faber* (man the worker) and to the achievements of human labor. For Marx, “productive life is ... species life,” and “the practical construction of an objective world, the manipulation of inorganic nature, is the confirmation of man as a species being.” In his *Manuscripts*, Marx reasoned that though ancient civilizations had built temples “in the service of the gods, just as the product belonged to the gods,” in fact neither the gods nor nature were the masters of labor. “What a paradox it would be,” this promethean revolutionary observed, “if the more man subjugates nature through his labor and the more divine miracles are made superfluous by the miracles of industry, the more he is forced to forgo the joy of production and the enjoyment of the product out of deference to these powers.”

Under capitalism, Marx argued in *Capital*, the tools and productive apparatus—the factory system—had become “a huge automaton,” a “mechanical monster” with “demon power,” “a lifeless mechanism independent of the workman,” now reduced to “a mere living appendage.” Indeed, “the greater the product, the more [humanity] is diminished.” But, he insisted in the *Manuscripts*, “if the product of labor does not belong to the worker, if it confronts him as an alien power, then this can only be because it belongs to some *other man than the worker*. If the worker’s activity is a torment for him, to another it must give *satisfaction* and pleasure. Not the gods, not nature, but only man himself can be this alien power over men.”

Because capitalism created the material basis for socialism, Marx and Engels championed capitalist economic development, even while protesting its horrors. In *The Communist Manifesto*, they declared, “Subjection of nature’s forces to man, machinery, application of chemistry to industry and agriculture, steam navigation, railways, electric telegraphs, clearing of whole continents for cultivation, canalization of rivers, whole populations conjured out of the ground—what earlier century had even a presentiment that such productive forces slumbered in the lap of social labor?” Lenin defined socialism as “merely state capitalist monopoly which is made to serve the interests of the whole people,” a matter of “workers’ soviets plus electrification,” and by the 1930s, soviet ideologues were demanding the “liquidation” of nature for the good of the socialist paradise.

Anarchists, too, have argued that while the machines engendered

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by industrial capitalism have been fundamental to the dispossession of human beings, they are also the key to liberation. One is reminded of Murray Bookchin's feverish vision of capital's technological cornucopia once the workers get their hands on the levers. "The most pressing task of technology will be to produce a surfeit of goods with a minimum of toil," he tells us in *Post-Scarcity Anarchism*. "Free communities would stand at the end of a cybernated assembly line with baskets to cart the goods home." (This book, mystifyingly, established his reputation as an eco-philosophical visionary—at least according to him and his devotees.)

But before this was possible, Marx and Engels argued, the workers had to lose their tools, the farmers their land, become mere appendages of the machine in order, ultimately, to become its masters. Even the earliest class divisions could be justified by virtue of the fact that they destroyed the former "backward conditions of scarcity" and laid the foundations for communism. Progress would destroy "infantile" myths and strip the world of its halos and mystifications by urbanizing the countryside, centralizing production, and rescuing people from the "idiocy of rural life." Once the workers appropriated the means of production and established communism, alienation would end and practical "self-activity" would "coincide with material life," casting off "all natural limitations." Finally, "the appropriation of a totality of instruments of production" would signal "the development of a totality of capacities in the individuals themselves."

If, according to Marx's *Manuscripts*, "Every self-estrangement of man, from himself and from nature, appears in the relation in which he places himself and nature to men other than and differentiated from himself"; if, "just as he estranges his own activity from himself, so he confers upon the stranger an activity which is not his own," this was not the only possible description of human estrangement. For Thoreau, the "means of production" themselves were also, inevitably, ends; and this alien power—"man himself"—was a power perfectly capable, as the Buddhists put it, of tying himself up without a rope. In "Civil Disobedience," after citing the motto, "That government is best which governs least," he adds: "That government is best which governs not at all." In *Walden* we find a parallel idea; if, as with government, less economic activity is better, zero economic activity must be best.

In *Walden*, Thoreau does not address the terrible conditions of the working classes in the satanic mills of England (though he passionately and eloquently demanded social justice for the immigrant Irish laborer and the captive African). He is, rather, reflecting on the relatively affluent and independent life of some of the most privileged people on the planet at the time, the New England farmers who are his neighbors. When the ideology of progress justified shoveling hungry children into factories on the European continent, and spurred industrial and agricultural expansion across America—most graphically in the form of the locomotive, the axe, the gun, the plow, and, let us not forget, the poisoned blanket—Thoreau's reflections at Walden Pond recall an anarchist tradition dating back to the breakup of the original communities and the consequent emergence of class societies and a kind of ancient proto-capitalism.

These farmers were to some degree, of course, dialectically

complementary to and dependent on the stolen labor and lives of enslaved Africans in the American South. But whatever the source of much of their wealth, the farmers and small tradesmen of New England were also part of a larger pattern. Diogenes the Cynic, an early anarcho-primitivist sage, summed up the tragedy of accumulation and progress in his aphorism, "A man keeps and feeds a lion; the lion owns a man." Thoreau, dubbed the "Yankee Diogenes" by a contemporary reviewer, examines this predicament, questioning progress, accumulation, property, work, and industrialization by turning the whole value system on its head.

Thoreau begins *Walden* by telling the reader, "I see young men, my townsmen, whose misfortune it is to have inherited farms, houses, barns, cattle, and farming tools; for these are more easily acquired than got rid of. Better if they had been born in the open pasture and suckled by a wolf, that they might have seen with clearer eyes what field they were called to labor in."

Observing the industrious New Englanders tending their wealth, Thoreau comments with his characteristic wit that they "appeared ... to be doing penance in a thousand remarkable ways. What I have heard of Bramins sitting exposed to four fires and looking in the face of the sun; or hanging suspended, with their heads

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downward, over flames; or looking at the heavens over their shoulders 'until it becomes impossible for them to resume their natural position, while from the twist of the neck nothing but liquids can pass into the stomach'; or dwelling, chained for life, at the foot of a tree; or measuring with their bodies, like caterpillars, the breadth of vast empires; or standing on one leg on the tops of pillars—even these forms of conscious penance are hardly more incredible and astonishing than the scenes which I daily witness. The twelve labors of Hercules were trifling in comparison with those which my neighbors have undertaken; for they were only twelve, and had an end; but I could never see that these men slew or captured any monster or finished any labor ... By a seeming fate, commonly called necessity, they are employed, as it says in an old book, laying up treasures which moth and rust will corrupt and thieves break through and steal."

This is "a fool's life," he adds, "as they will find when they get to the end of it, if not before ... When the farmer has got his house, he may not be the richer but the poorer for it, and it be the house that has got him...."

As we have seen, for Marx and his followers, true freedom meant more—more power, more accumulation, more reach—and mass technics could only be the instrument of proletarian liberation. "It took both time and experience," wrote Marx in *Capital*, "before the workpeople learnt to distinguish between machinery and its employment by capital, and to direct their attacks, not against the material instruments of production, but against the mode in which they are used."

According to radical political economy's paradigm, under private capitalism the alienated worker functions as a slave to another and for another. In contrast, under marxian "communism," the proletariat will finally wrest the deed to the property from the cold, dead fingers of the capitalists, then put private property "into the museum of antiquities, next to the spinning wheel and the bronze axe," as Engels explained. Communism will finally replace "the government of persons" with "the administration of things and the direction of the processes of production."

In reality, as Thoreau reminds us, "We do not ride upon the railroad; it rides upon us." According to the perspective of perennial economy, it does not ultimately matter who "owns" the machinery or the fruits of the machinery (though only a single-minded doctrinaire would assert that there could be no unambiguous difference at all). What matters is what one is required to surrender in order to produce and maintain this technological and social machinery, and the inevitable life of desperation, be it quiet or loud, one finds oneself living in order to do so.

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In this sense, then, Thoreau seems more radical than Marx, as Lewis Mumford observed in *The Myth of the Machine*. "Men have become the tools of their tools," states Thoreau. "Our inventions are wont to be pretty toys, which distract our attention from serious things. They are but improved means to an unimproved end" And he adds: "To make a railroad round the world available to all mankind is equivalent to grading the whole surface of the planet...."

More of more has come to mean still more, always beyond the reach of the billions unable to achieve even barely enough to survive. Human mastery is dismembering global and local life webs in its search for the land of megatechnic milk and honey. And the planetary work machine is in fact (de)grading the entire biosphere. Since the emergence of global capitalism, more people than ever before—most of them forced by poverty and war, some enticed by industrial tourism—have been uprooted and scattered around the planet. In the process, the world is everywhere turning into the same place—an air-conditioned high-rise fortress standing amid the ruins of villages now reduced to smoldering cesspools. Smog from ships, aircraft, and motor vehicles is now detected everywhere on earth, including over remote expanses of ocean, and the petrochemical scars from jet fuel carve and contaminate the skies. Climatologists now talk soberly of "climate death."

And yet the idea of industrial progress continues to drive us forward, if only as a gesture of resignation. Thoreau observes, "Men have an indistinct notion that if they keep up this activity of joint stocks and spades long enough all will at length ride somewhere, in next to no time, and for nothing; but though a crowd rushes to the depot, and the conductor shouts 'All aboard!' when the smoke is blown away and the vapor condensed, it will be perceived that a few are riding, but the rest are run over—and it will be called, and will be, 'A melancholy accident.'"

And here we cannot help but think of the "melancholy accident" that was state socialism under the banners of Marx and all the politicians who fastened their wagons to his name. We also think of the melancholy disaster of urban-industrialism unfolding around us—for the multitudes daily crushed under the iron wheels, but also imminently for the few who are, for the time being, riding. Who are we? Where are we going? Why does it appear to be so utterly impossible to stop, even to divert, the march of "progress"? Only a perennial economy can begin to confront these uncertainties.

And what if Marx's dreamscape could somehow function without becoming an ecological calamity, and we were to find ourselves riding the train, possessors at last of the "satisfaction and pleasure" previously usurped by someone else? What if temples and pyramids were now raised to glorify those who built them, their own "species life," rather than glorifying God or Master? In such a case we may organize "production anew on the basis of free and equal association of the producers" (Engels)—but we will surely have to attend meetings every night to feed and keep the lion, as well—a condition akin to Thoreau's "confirmed desperation."

According to the perennial wisdom of ancient cynics, taoist dropouts, indigenous sages, and this anarchist eccentric, not only the alienated mode but the temples themselves are to be viewed with suspicion. "If it is asserted that civilization is a real advance in the condition of man,—and I think that it is, though only the wise

There may be a socialism worth salvaging, a socialism with enough good sense to recognize the perennial wisdom required to keep it from becoming more of the same old plague.

improve their advantages, it must be shown that it has produced better dwellings without making them costly," he argues, and he adds, in a moment of simple yet remarkable economic insight: "and the cost of a thing is an amount of what I call life which is required to be exchanged for it, immediately or in the long run." We seem to be seeing only now how much life the earth has had to surrender in the long run.

"To what end, pray, is so much stone hammered?" asks Thoreau. "In Arcadia, when I was there, I did not see any hammering stone ... One piece of good sense would be more memorable than a monument as high as the moon. I love better to see stones in place." Building monuments, a nation "buries itself alive." While many are curious about who built the monuments of the past, he comments, "for my part, I should like to know who in those days did not build them—who were above such trifling. ..." Even three pieces of limestone he had collected provide a lesson in accumulation and the construction of an artifactual world; "terrified to find that they required to be dusted daily, when the furniture of my mind was all undusted still," he tells us, "I threw them out the window in disgust."

Too humble to casually dismiss the laborers who built civilization, Thoreau imagines "a million Irishmen starting up from all the shanties in the land" to demand, "Is not this railroad which we have built a good thing?" and he responds, "Yes, ... comparatively good, that is, you might have done worse; but I wish, as you are brothers of mine, that you could have spent your time better than digging in this dirt. ..."

Of course, Marx has an answer to this primitivist impulse, calling it "crude communism," a "levelling-down" and "an abstract negation of the entire world of culture and civilization, the regression to the *unnatural* simplicity of the *poor* and crude man who has few needs and who has not only failed to go beyond private property, but has not even reached it." Marx has a point—does questioning the *more* mean throwing the accumulated treasures of human labor out the windows of our museums, libraries, and homes? But let us also recall Marx's championing of the British conquest of India and all the allegedly necessary violence against the "poor and crude" men and women living in tipis, huts, and the like who had to be dragged into history by the hair. There is no simple answer to this contradiction.

As for me, I confess to having my Marx days and my Thoreau days—and more of them, just lately, have probably been Marx days. I can get mad as hell about the dizzying injustices of this world—the mothers and fathers dragged away from their families to kill and die in Iraq, the other families huddling under the rockets' red glare, the mind-numbing daily slavery and also the terror of the

unemployed when the house note is due, the people rifling through garbage for a pin to sell or hard crumb to devour, the brazen plunder of the plutocrats in their gold limousines on their way to global conferences to increase the profits of the Combine.

I find myself desperately defending the "trifling" and the "comparatively good" from the catastrophe brought upon us all by the frenzied, tragic greed of the men at capital's helm, for whom far too much is still not enough. Clearly, my Marx days are also Gandhi days—I know well that for many people on this earth, a little less would be a disaster, and a little more would go a long way. I still believe, as Gandhi put it, that there's enough in the world for everyone's need, just not enough for some people's greed.

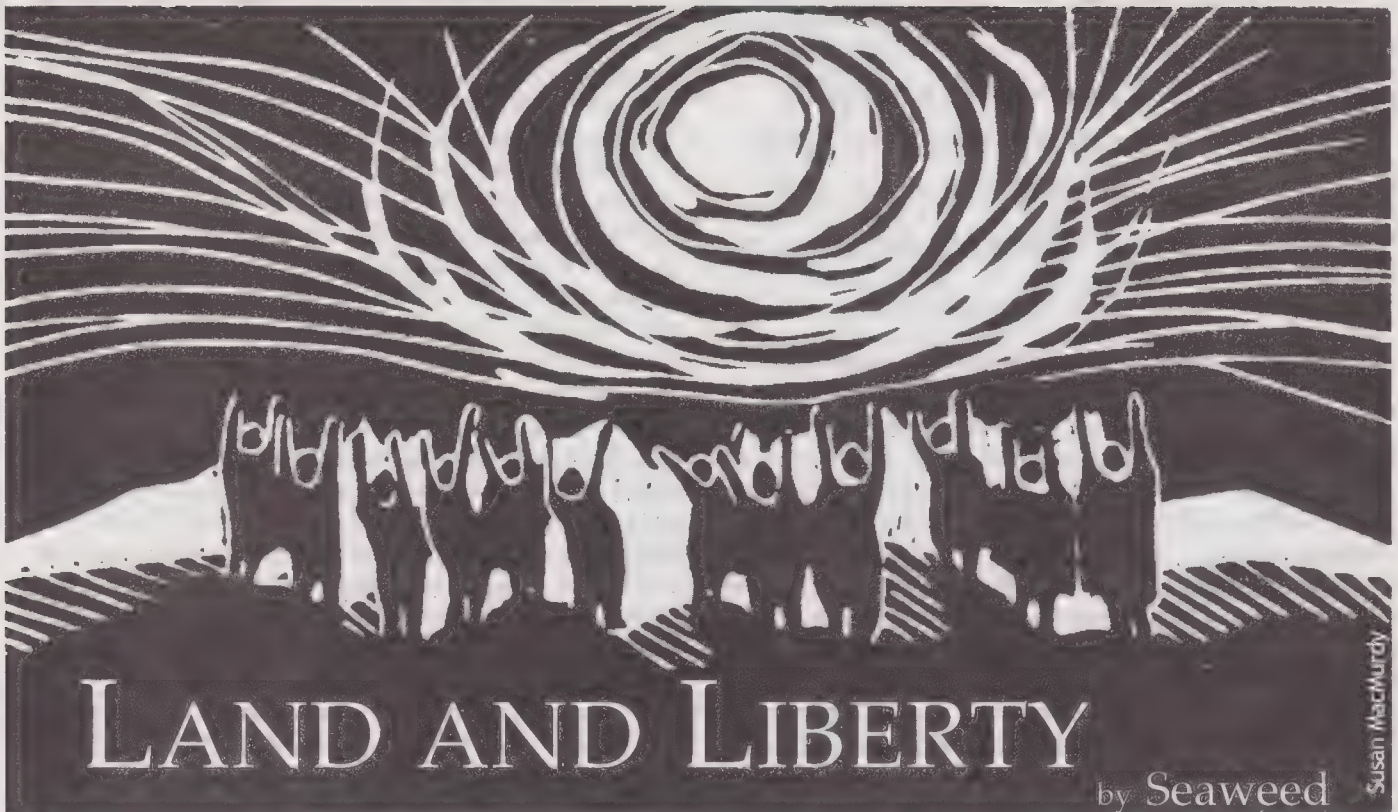
But my Thoreau days remind me, too, that it can be a curse even to yearn for the wrong thing, for that green light at the end of the distant dock, which seems to be the green breast of a new and promising world. And to demand it? To fight for it? To see it as the culmination of human history? Now that state socialism is all but dead, I think there may be another socialism worth salvaging from the ruins, a socialism with enough good sense to recognize the perennial wisdom required to keep it from becoming more of the same old plague.

The power of the megatechnic bribe and its obsession to create a "higher" standard of living brought neither revolution nor mastery, but rather a deepening loss of autonomy and a radically diminishing capacity to establish a simpler, deeper mode of life. Mumford was not alone in recognizing this problem. Gandhi did the same in his defense of the spinning wheel as meditative cosmos and basis for autonomy, his defense of vernacular village culture against industrialism. By the end of the twentieth century, indigenous and village peoples were resisting global development and explicitly defending both the form and content of ancient lifeways, and green radicals were questioning the industrial hydra altogether.

In contrast to the project of promethean mastery over "inorganic matter" (read: nature), a perennial economy insists on raising questions that sound incomprehensible to most people today; it asks *why*, and *for what purpose*? And it reminds us that less is more—not less in the sense of an enforced penury, as with the children Engels rightly championed, wasting away in the textile mills of England, and the children locked into sweatshops today, dying to produce this higher, commodity- and energy-bloated standard of living for export to the metropole—but as a conscious choice, a decision to establish a deeper and more egalitarian form of (self-) mastery.

We still face this choice—there may still be time to acquire enough wisdom to "improve [our] advantages" by carefully and mindfully abandoning our present fool's life. Doing so could bring a freedom we can now barely imagine—a freedom that might come from being suckled by the wolf of our own wildness, and from the recognition of what fields we were indeed called to labor in.

Note: This critique of Marx has been informed by Langdon Winner's invaluable *Autonomous Technology: Technics-out-of-Control as a Theme in Political Thought* (1977). I cover similar ground in *Beyond Bookchin: Preface for a Future Social Ecology* (1996), and in "Marxism, Anarchism and the Roots of the New Totalitarianism" (in the July 1981 FE). For Mumford's comments on Marx and Thoreau, see *The Pentagon of Power* (1970), chapter twelve.



LAND AND LIBERTY

by Seaweed

Susan MacMurdy

Perhaps it's for the best that you don't have a memory of yourself centuries ago as you looked proudly around your community — a community deeply embedded in a habitat. This is where you first made love, learned to swim, caught your first fish, perhaps even fought a first battle against belligerent neighbors. Practically everybody in your community knows the names of the flora and fauna of your habitat, where the berries are, when the birds leave and return. There is a common history that is told and re-told. Most of you have felt a kinship with the totality of your habitat — its weather patterns, rocks, streams, mountains and its unique smells and sounds — the singular music of your home. In short, you have a sense of place, you belong. These are all my relations, you will exclaim, as you look around.

Living as anarchists is in our blood. Since the first dawn we have been free, living in genuine communities embedded in bio-regions. Our feelings of indifference to our potential habitats grew over time, out of an imposed separation from our habitats as our homes. Imposed by a world view that seems to have resulted from a series of errors, coincidences and aberrations affecting a few human cultures throughout the so-called Paleolithic

era. This is where we find the beginning of our systematic self-enslavement and self-alienation. The developments usually associated with the Neolithic revolution (urban living, a reliance on agriculture, etc.) have ultimately led to the present mega-technological civilization.

Over the centuries, myths have permeated civilized societies in order to make seem natural the ideologies that civilization is predicated on. These myths include the necessity of coercive authority, a belief in Progress, the notion of nature as hostile and the belief that economics (exchange rather than gift giving) are inherent in all human societies. Preceding urban civilization, many changes must have occurred within these cultures' collective psychic experience, for instance the emergence of symbolic mediation (language, art, time, etc.) that made domestication more likely to occur. These destructive upheavals and changes led to sedentary lives and the domestication of formerly wild plants and animals, breaking age-old, organic life-ways and creating a permanent cycle of increasing separation from our natural surroundings.

No matter the chronology, or whether there actually is an original source of domination, our contemporary predicament is most characterized by lack of access to a habitat within which to freely live in self-reliant ways. Restoring or reclaiming genuine habitats means the liberation of geographical areas from the rule of the state and capital, as well as renewing our kinship with nature. Free people living in free communities in harmony with the biosphere need to locate their communities within real habitats that are understood and valued by all members.

If we can push the project for social freedom and harmony with the biosphere toward one initially dedicated to the liberation of geographical areas, then several things become possible. For

instance, a movement of genuine and stable communities can begin to establish itself. Once this begins to occur, with its tastes of authentic community bonds, freedom, self-reliance, organic self-direction, etc., our ability and motivation to resist will be much stronger.

While the rule of capital and centralized power might seem omniscient, they actually aren't. The enemy does not occupy every inch. There are many blind spots, openings, frontiers where the sentinels and soldiers are few. We can take advantage of these. Our struggle for individual and collective freedom isn't hopeless or so overwhelming as to make total surrender appear reasonable or inevitable. For instance, because so much of our captivity relies on internalized cops, on the daily reproduction of social misery by our own compliance with the various roles expected of us (worker, citizen, soldier, intellectual, consumer, activist, tourist, artist, man, woman, etc.), the weakest point in our opponents armor is probably our ability to refuse these roles. It is through withdrawal from scripted roles and cultural constructs that we will get to know our neighbors and comrades as more complex individuals (subjects) and thereby be able to create the communities of resistance that we need in order to form the bases of our offensives.

Most non-native radicals are admirably fighting against specific forms of oppression and injustice or even trying to find ways to oppose all forms of domination, but few are fighting for a community and the territory it depends on. This is because so many non-natives of North America are still visitors or settlers; they haven't made this place home yet. Not enough of us apparently have either deep bonds with our surroundings or with those who live within them. Our insurgency should be focused on the liberation of territory as potential habitats from the rule of the market and statist forces so that our nascent communities can become authentic communities, thereby gaining the strength to be genuinely effective forces for authoritarians to reckon with. Non-native rebels should be aiming for a time when they too will be defending real communities and their habitats/territories.

I take great inspiration from our comrades in Chiapas, Mexico, who, in defense of their territories and communities, took the first shot, and to a large degree, have won. With the realization that indeed we have nothing to lose but our false freedom, false wealth and false community, we too could be preparing ourselves for secession from the nation states and ideologies that hold us captive, wherever we live.

Much of North America consists of territory still claimed by the descendants of earlier tribal/clan/extended family peoples, and anti-authoritarian rebels need to acknowledge this when going native where we live. It's important for us to educate ourselves about the indigenous folks who lived in our area before contact with empire and its civilized soldiers and citizens, and to reach out to the traditionalists, our natural allies, among them.

Many anarchists and other rebels still seek anarchy through the creation of large political organizations, by winning converts and taking over the levers of production. They want us to manage civilization for ourselves rather than abolishing it and creating a total transformation of our life-ways. Many syndicalists, for instance, while having the laudable goals that all anarchists have, namely

equality and freedom through the abolition of both the state and capitalism, are still primarily focused on achieving self-management of industry, not the abolition of the industrial mode of living. Their vision still includes cities, factories, a productivist rather than a subsistence ethic, an overarching infrastructure (transportation, research, development, etc.), large scale agriculture, etc. This doesn't mean that anti-authoritarian rebels like them and other pro-civilizationist anarchists aren't the allies of those who want to re-wild. It just means that while we might have kinship with individuals from within these movements, we don't share a kinship with the movements themselves. I nevertheless retain a strong affinity with most anarchist currents. Those at the levers of production can play a pivotal role in our liberation, not by kicking out the bosses and instituting self-management, but by destroying the productive apparatus of the bosses, thereby opening the doors for new life-ways to emerge.

What I am suggesting is the creation of organically self-organized subsistence movements that are aimed at asserting access to land. Of course we could likely expect that the cops would be sent in, either immediately or eventually, but that's what anarchist insurgency is, reclaiming our lives! When local folks, without the intermediary of parties or experts, collectively reclaim the ability to self-organize and self-provide within a specific territory this is called rebellion.

Community defense is a different topic than discussions around violence and non-violence. It is a question of our willingness to defend our gains, our communities, our territories and our habitats as we create them. Based on conditions specific to their time and place, some attempts at community self-organizing will experience more repression, more violence, more prison time. Regardless, we need to offer solidarity to both the armed comrades and the commune drop outs, indigenous direct actionists as well as the playful bio-regionalist wanderers. If we want a diverse world, we will need diverse ways to get there. But history has shown that the foundations of power won't be quietly dissolved through withdrawal alone.

Organized defense isn't wrong or futile, it's necessary. Unions may have been reasonably good defense organizations in the past for many within the proletariat, but no longer have that role. Some indigenous activists have warrior societies, but these grew out of specific cultural experiences that most non-natives don't share. Many fighting movements, like the IRA, ETA, etc. over the last century have focused on national liberation and the recognition of a homegrown elite while rarely, if ever, talking about truly autonomous territories for local populations. However there have been many movements that are inspiring that had a libertarian basis, the Zapatistas, for example, with their cry of Land and Liberty.

I can imagine a local mutual aid network that also facilitates martial arts training and the teaching of eco-defense skills. The 'warrior' skills and training are only brought forth when necessary. In the meantime green freedom-loving radicals concentrate on creating/asserting some habitat in a peaceful manner. In fact creating these mutual aid networks with a community defense skills component could be seen as an integral part of creating communities of resistance. Let's liberate spaces so that we can once again live in harmony with each other and our surroundings and be ready and willing to defend them.

"Lady
with the very modern illness
agoraphobia
but ancient as fear
in a Greek marketplace

Lady
I have seen your face
crumple and break in ecstasy
of terror of horror of being
alive in the sewer world
feeling alien thoughts beating
at your mind an office desk
protruding from one ear
a subway train from the other
bells clanging gongs shouting
while you're washing the dishes
terror
of the market place
and falling
falling into that white place
without shadows
where the rivers are milk
and Lethe dreams
and nothingness has no horizon..."

excerpt from Al Purdy's "The Stone Bird" in
To Paris Never Again (Madeira Park, BC:
Harbour Publishing, 1997).

The Oxford dictionary terms "agoraphobia" as "a morbid dislike of public places." This definition stems from the Greek word "agora" which is "an assembly, hence the place of assembly, especially the marketplace." In the one world of global capitalism, where the marketplace has increasingly swallowed what used to be public space and the commons has been devoured by the mall, agoraphobia needs to be redefined.

Is it "morbid" to feel anxiety in a situation where public places are fast becoming privatized? While not wanting to romanticize the agony associated with those suffering from agoraphobia, by flipping the script we can see that it is the relationship between the marketplace and the public sphere which is morbid rather than the adverse reaction of the individual who is repelled by it. Any personal trauma associated with such an insidious relationship and the corresponding acceleration of street surveillance to protect this expansion of private property should not be simplistically dismissed as "mental illness." Rather what is labeled as "psychosomatic" malaise in this respect is not merely a case of mind over matter, but is rooted in our dis-ease at the increasing usurpation of the public domain by the marketplace.

These days, not to be deeply troubled by such a toxic confluence of the marketplace and public space is to be comatose. What is truly morbid is to numb the awareness of our fears in

REFUSING the



this regard with a passivity-inducing diet of anti-depressants, computer game tidbits, "reality" television morsels, and Clear Channel sound bites; all of which are conveniently provided for our consumption by the market itself. Together they serve to screen out or allay those fears of the marketplace considered to be abnormal and triumphantly proclaim the normality of a way of life predicated upon hierarchy, competition and the unequal distribution of power and wealth.

We are encouraged to voyeuristically watch a growing array of dog-eat-dog survival shows which contrast sharply with the boredom of our daily work ruts and leisure time passivities. We are made prey to makeover shows that exploit our body image insecurities and remind us that our physical imperfections can be masked or surgically eliminated for a price. As an ego boost, we can conveniently turn on *Jerry Springer* to allow us to feel superior to the oh so tacky losers who are his guests. And, along with the cheezy competitors on *American Idol*, we are enticed to vicariously dream of being stars with enough fame and fortune to purchase anything we want.

MARKETPLACE

by Ron Sakolsky



—Maurice Spira

Though this manipulative media landscape and the capitalist marketplace of which it is a part are social constructions which can be dismantled, they are assumed to be permanent givens by the rulebook of consensus reality. Even if while consuming this programming, a mysterious fear should well up in us, we have been conditioned not to blame the market. The officially prescribed remedy is to turn on the tv and increase the dosage of consumption.

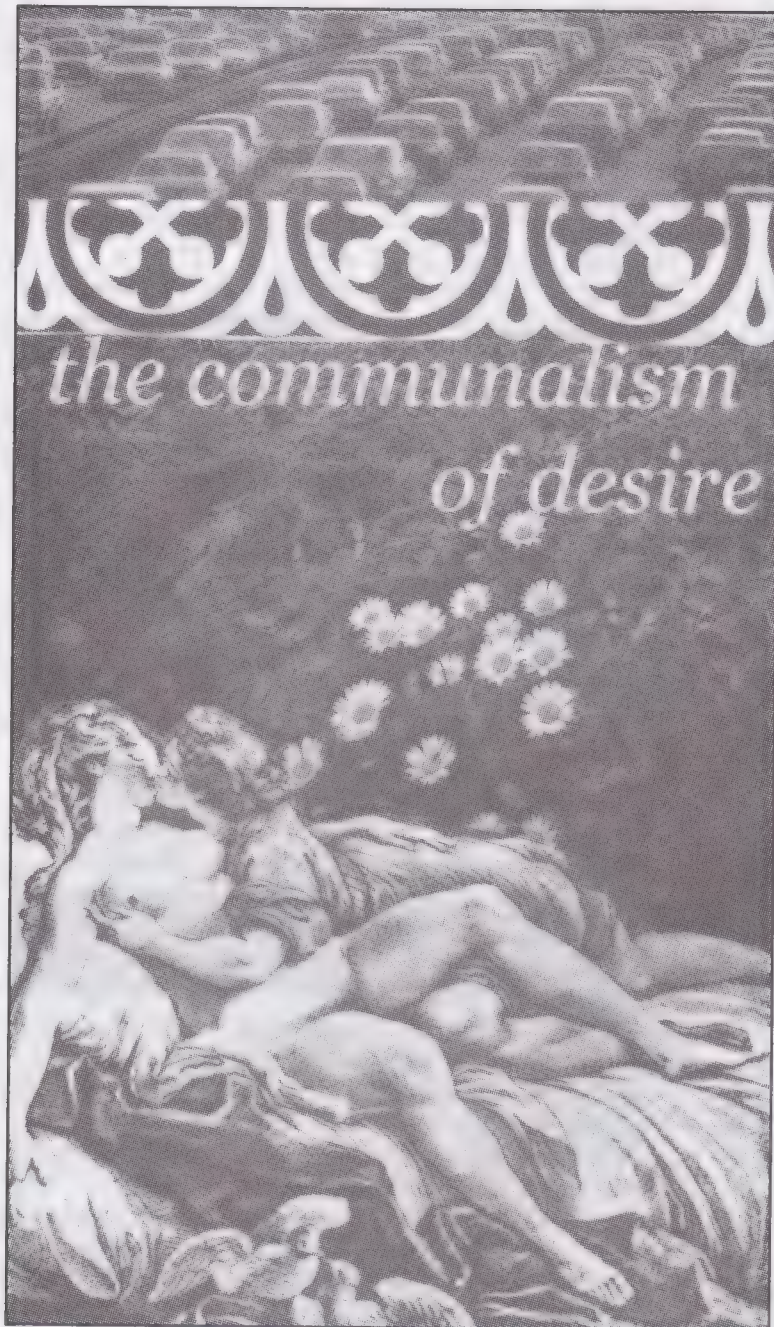
Increasingly then, we find that both our psychic well-being and our individual identities have become synonymous with market demographics. It is no accident that Dubya in a televised speech urged troubled Americans to go shopping when faced with the horrors of 911. Not only does hyper-consumption fuel the economy, but our fears of the market are marketed back to us in the form of frightening images of appallingly evil foreign terrorists who are said to be jealous of our high consumption lifestyle or anti-corporate globalization protesters who are seen as so disdainful of our affluent position in the world that they are as bad as terrorists themselves. In this

politically self-serving scenario, freedom is equated with consumer choice. Likewise, our curiosity about why the imperial chickens came home to roost at the World Trade Center is diverted into marketable thoughts of Kentucky Fried Chicken dinners to be eaten while avidly watching the spectacle of competitive sports, rooting for “our” side in Iraq on the 6:00 news, or vacantly imbibing MTV’s seductive non-stop commercial for music industry product.

Of course, if we’re too afraid to step outside of doors to go shopping at a time when even our cellphones have become cameras, then we can just log on to E-Bay or turn on the shopping channel and bring the unadulterated realm of the marketplace directly into our house where it seems so warm and fuzzy emanating from the home entertainment system in our living room. Or better yet, check it out on the screen in our bedroom, where the marketplace snuggles up to us, colonizes our dreams with disposable products and sexualizes our consumer fantasies. In this manner, our consciousness is saturated not only with the hype that surrounds individual products, but with the assumed inevitability of the capitalist economy as our most intimate environs are absorbed into the burgeoning space of the marketplace. To this home invasion can be added the buy and sell of commercial jingles, computer pop-up ads, and the corporate media’s God Bless America propaganda all of which are so damn familiar that the resulting alienation which we experience becomes oddly comforting in its predictability. We forget that even the overused term “thinking outside the box” was itself a commercial cliché in its original advertising context. Never mind. We are encouraged to drink deeply from the waters of oblivion and be sedated.

But, are we? Twenty-first century manifestations of the agoraphobic impulse can be alternatively understood as evidence that the tantalizing logic of the market can never be so pervasive as to be totalizing. All is not lost. Rather than dismiss those with agoraphobic sensitivities in apolitical terms, we should recognize their situation as being analogous to that of the unfortunate canary in the coal mine warning us of imminent danger so that we can get the hell out of there before it is too late. Just as paranoia can be seen as a heightened state of awareness, agoraphobia needs to be recognized as a distress signal that highlights social rather than individual causation. The problem is collective, and so is the solution.

As anarchists, we might be wise to recognize “the agoraphobe within” since the same oppressive social tensions which cause an agoraphobic reaction in those of us who are especially sensitive to them are by now internalized in everyone’s consciousness. Perhaps what is called for now is a radical reinterpretation of agoraphobia as, in essence, a refusal of the marketplace which can be seen as being akin to the refusal of wage slavery at the point of production and the refusal of consent at the polling place. Agoraphobia could then be recast as an embryonic cry of resistance to the terrorism of the capitalist marketplace rather than merely being seen as a halting whimper of despair desperately uttered as the victim slowly sinks more and more deeply into the economic mire. From the depths of the quagmire, we hear the rising scream: “I am not a market!”



notes on the gift economy

The fear of communism comes with the notion that the State will take away our things, force us to share with unworthy neighbors, and leave us without self-determination. That contributes to why we need to replace communism with communalism.

To avoid old-school communism and the welfare office, the working-class and middle-class servants of post-industrial capitalism willingly suffer all sorts of indignities, while tolerating, for the global underclass, an unprecedented neo-slavery of staggering horror. A unipolar, neoliberal, global capitalism has emerged, and we face the accelerating influence of a glob-

al junta motivated by purely mercantile interests. The crushing one-world economic system has resuscitated the need for a revolutionary alternative; to counter the new boss, radicals might create a sustainable, communal opposition. To reclaim the communal alternative, we must un-hinge communism from its authoritarian baggage and purge forever the tendency to form vanguardist bureaucracies when voluntary, horizontal associations are all that we need. Abolishing wage work and private property, socializing all necessities such as food, land, and water: these demands continue the classic precepts of anarcho-syndicalism and libertarian communism. But today, we can extend these classic notions and envision an even more radical gift economy as the only alternative to capitalism.

Desire Not Duty

In the 1974 post-situationist manifesto *The Right to Be Greedy*, the For Ourselves collective contends that the problem with capitalism is not too much greed, but too little. Through articulated desires, the For Ourselves collective contrasts an ever-expansive social wealth to the narrow wealth of the marketplace. This philosophy of "communist egoism" shares much with Lewis Hyde's *The Gift*, which describes an economy fueled by a non-commodified hunger, desire, and lust, "an economy of the creative spirit: to speak of the inner gift we accept as the object of our labor, and the outer gift that has become a vehicle of culture."

Likewise, the problem with communism is not too much sharing but too little. However, when radicals invoke the gift economy, are we somehow motivated by guilt rather than the greed of egoless egoism? Do we feed the hungry and fight against war because we passionately want a world where everyone eats and no one kills? Or do we engage in revolutionary and communal gestures because we think this is what we are supposed to do?

In an essay on Marcel Mauss, an early theorist of the gift economy, anarchist academic David Graeber suggests, "Economists and Christian theologians agree that if one takes pleasure in an act of generosity, it is somehow less generous. They just disagree on the moral implications. To counteract this very perverse logic, Mauss emphasized the 'pleasure' and 'joy' of giving. In traditional societies, there was not assumed to be any contradiction between what we would call self-interest and concern for others; the whole point of the traditional gift is that it furthers both at the same time."

While capitalist neo-calvinism renounces personal pleasure in pursuit of profit, state communism denounces pleasure in the pursuit of equality. Stalinist-style communism decreed that people could not root out their own bourgeois tendencies, postulated that desire would always create class antagonism, and finally ordered people to give up joyful autonomy in the name of sacrifice and unity. A gift society would firmly jettison such

doctrines of self-denial, seeing radical self-satisfaction in the wealth of relationships, invoking pleasure in what cannot be bought, sold, or bartered as the antidote to economy itself.

The communism of duty is imposed from outside, is dead and dying with the leftovers of leftism. The communalism of desire emerges from within; it's the communism you want because it fulfills all your desires and the desires of those you love. It rejects the mechanistic world view of duty and guilt and instead invokes an animistic one of pleasure and play.

Possessions and things, not property and commodities

When we say we oppose private property, we generally refer to the private usurpation of all that should be shared, like wind, water, and land, especially land held and exploited for profit by absentee landlords.

Some radicals reject personal possessions entirely and choose a completely unattached life, while others enjoy their things, tools, and toys for both utilitarian and ornamental value. Some of us are wary of an ascetic anti-materialism that rejects creature comforts as part of some radical rite of passage. Is it possible to endorse instead an ecstatic materialism that stops far short of the extraordinary excesses of the capitalists?

When confronted with sacrificial, guilt-based politics, Emma Goldman declared, "I insisted that our cause could not expect me to behave as a nun and that the movement should not be turned into a cloister. If it meant that, I did not want it. I want freedom, the right to self expression, everybody's right to beautiful, radiant things."

Indeed, for the gift economy to flourish, we need to have things to give. If never offered for sale, if never packaged in plastic, if never altered with a price tag, if always moving in generosity, possessions acquire an expansive and erotic equality. There's no need to confuse these objects of desire with mere commodities. How might we get such things? For now, some people will continue to buy them. Others might make them, and certainly, many will continue to pilfer them.

Just as some radicals confuse possessions with property, others confuse shoplifting with consumerism and critique it as merely mimicking the commodity system. But today, quite a culture of ethical shoplifting has emerged in radical subcultures.

As Abbie Hoffman put it, "To steal from a brother or sister is evil. To not steal from the institutions that are the pillars of the Pig Empire is equally immoral." While shoplifting remains problematic—especially when simply a thrill-seeking gesture of great risk for dubious return—it's a wrench in the system of buying and selling in lieu of the future of creating and sharing. Consider these pre-emptive strikes to remember the freedom of the past and presage the gift economy of tomorrow.

Invoking pleasure in what cannot be bought, sold, or bartered is an antidote to economy itself.

The gift economy demands not scarcity but abundance. In this spirit, Julian Beck of the Living Theater insisted, "Abundance can only endure if ever larger groups are brought to share in it." Imagine the world where we all have our cake and eat it, too: an economy of creation and appreciation replaces the old axis of production and consumption.

Everything for everybody, all the time, and for free

Of all the utopian contributions of the 1960s counterculture, none may be so great as the all-encompassing revolutionary notion that everything should be free. Revolutionaries knew then that even barter was too conservative and political communism too right-wing. Social wealth is multiplied in relationships, destroyed in miserly restrictions.

For a brief period, this was not the watered-down, hip subculture capitalism that we know so well today; in fact, for the original advocates freedom for its own sake, freeing everything for everybody embodied "free" as both noun and verb in the most extreme and extraordinary forms of utopian thinking. This was then translated into the communal actions and distribution networks that fused the forces of resistance under one political and cultural and economic banner.

In the poetic and uncompromising manifestos of Abbie Hoffman, Julian Beck, The White Panther Party, and the San Francisco Diggers, property is transcended. When

these pranksterish prophets and their kin put such notions into practice, it looked then as if the old order was crumbling, and the gift economy looked like the new world.

When today's anarchist activists speak of creating community centers, autonomous zones, radical retreats, and counter-institutions, a trend that has steadily continued and mutated since the late 1980s, they update and continue the movement for free clinics, free schools, and free stores instigated the late '60s and early '70s. Now as then, our anti-economics acknowledges a transhistorical thread; remembering and reclaiming the commons.

Today in North America, remnants of these utopian proclamations, permutations, and practices can be seen at Rainbow Gatherings and the Burning Man Festival and with groups like Food Not Bombs.

Somehow, these values, visions, and practical vistas must supersede the stigma associated with hippie-punk subcultures and become more tangible and available to ever larger groups of people. The time may come all too quickly when our experiments in self-sustenance and our rehearsals for revolution must feed and house our bodies as well as our dreams.

This will be a gamble, but what do we have to lose? As capitalism kicks down another door to destroy the future, the gift economy is "kickin' it" as an ecstatic alternative to collective denial.

—Anu Bonobo

PASTORAL LETTER :

A FRAGMENT

by Peter Lamborn Wilson

Imagine an alternate dimension where
dervishes are roaming around America
sects of Swedenborgian hobos, etc.
You're there camping in the cemetery
long black hair in tangles ghostwhite face

Sion County is remote, rural, and poor, and always has been. Around 1870 a breakaway sect of German Amish-type farmers—the Sabbatarian Anabaptists of the “Seventh Day Dunkers,” moved there from Pennsylvania and settled down in the river valleys of the county’s northeast.

In the mountainous northwest lies the small reservation of a band of Iroquois. The Indians and the Dunkers have always held to distant but amicable relations though nowadays the Protestants tend to disapprove of the bingo and fireworks concessions with which the tribe supplements its income.

In the 1960’s a number of hippies invaded Sion County. At first there was some conflict with the locals, but by now the hippies have mellowed and settled down. Some of them joined a small eccentric split-off sub-sect of the Dunkers. Some practice permaculture or alternative agriculture; a few of their farms are very serious and self-sufficient; others work in “green” construction and trades, including black-smithing and carriage-building, since so many locals use horses rather than cars. And of course some grow hemp.

By the 1980’s, the county had begun to rival the emerald Triangle, and the Feds were beginning to sniff around. Something had to be done! A “Combine” was organized among the hemp growers and smugglers, and an interesting political force emerged based on anonymous funders and a small libertarian faction of the local Republican Party. The Combine managed not only to infiltrate the Republicans but also to win control of the country, including the offices of sheriff, district attorney, judge, etc. The Combine also earned the support of the Dunkers by opposing “development” and

transmuted under this weird Libertarian/Welfarist coalition.

Everything possible is voluntarized—but funded by the County. The one public high school in the region is privatized but taken over by a non-profit alternative education group funded by the County. Zoning is more-or-less abolished, but a Green Covenant is circulated, and any non-signers are boycotted or otherwise driven out of the region. An extremist vigilante group has vandalized or destroyed a few structures deemed ecologically offensive; somehow the Sheriff never manages to apprehend any of these mysterious eco-warriors.

The county capital, Sion City (pop. 18,000 or so), has the plastic rural highway fast-food sprawl and rundown 19th century backstreet gloom of any similar sad place in the bioregion—but in a way this is mere camouflage. The fast-food franchises have been bought-out by whole-food/organic collectives, which are funded by the County. Still they use names like Tastee Burgers or Salad Bar & Grill; the locals get a lot of amusement out of this sly nomenclature. The Public Library consists of four pink double-wide mobile homes, but contains amazing collections. It’s as if the whole town was a disguise.

“The danger,” says the Sheriff, “is that the place could become too damn picturesque. Dunkers in black hats in their buggies, a few Indians in traditional gear, spaced-out tie-dye types: a tourist trap, Woodstock! We don’t like tourists around here, do we! And as Debord would put it, we don’t want to work at the job of representing some quaint notion of authenticity just to become the Exotic Other for a media-poisoned shower of zombie voyeurs!”

"Maybe you'd prefer some Jeremiah on thorazine stumbling out of the Time Magazine of your head—hollywood jerusalem grand guignol cheapjack prognostications of nuclear ho-hum & SciFi african plagues—Y2K, harmonic convergence, yuppie Rapture—a culture gets the armageddon it deserves—fire ice whimper bang or eternal sit-com, no, it's all far more interesting than we deserve."

—interview with the Sheriff

Up-country, however, there's no presence of normalcy. The Dunkers are living in the 18th century; some of the hippies and Indians are heading back toward the Stone Age. The remotest valleys are given over to hemp plantations and/or bizarre drop-out cults. Over a third of the County has no electricity, other than a bit of solar, and no mail delivery. The Combine or the County own much of the wildest land in various forms, including parks and preserves.

The Sheriff told me, "Naturally, we 'deplore' the idea of funding utopia by crime. I admit that Sion County has some disagreeable aspects. But how can you hope to maintain even such a flawed and low-level utopia in a 'time of war' without some alternate economy? A Green Liberated Zone would be impossible; we all know it wouldn't be permitted. We try to think global—but we have got to act local."

The Monastery of St. John-in-the-Wilderness was built in 1910 by a group of Anglican Benedictine monks who intended to proselytize the nearby Indian reservation. But after a dim career it burned down in 1963 and the Church sold the ruin and the land (hundreds of acres) to an investor who later sold it to the Combine.

The monastery gardens and greenhouses were taken over by the Society for the Interiorization of Lost Knowledge (SILK), a small group of Combine research "scientists" who began

experimenting with ethno-botany and bio-assay work. They constructed a secret underground "alchemical" lab.

The ruined monastery and the ramshackle but habitable Abbot's House or Abbey were turned over to another group that organized itself as the Monastery of St. John-in-the-Wilderness, Order of the Resurrection, Anglican Benedictine (Non-juring): the "Greenfriars." The Christian identity is useful as camouflage, but some of the members are into it sincerely. They perform regular masses in the abbot's Chapel, and in summer organize "Sacred Concerts & Festivals" in the picturesque and spruced-up ruins of the old monastery.

Some of these festivals are fuelled by the very potent liquors and concoctions of SILK, and some of the monks work in SILK's gardens (for surprisingly healthy salaries paid in cash). The monks grow vegetables and keep a few chickens and goats, but are not involved in subsistence farming. Needless to say, the Order receives a grant from the County in return for leasing some of their remoter acreage to the Combine.

About half the brothers and sisters live in the old Abbot's House, and half are scattered through the woods in various caves, Taoist huts, Franciscan oratories, or prefab yurts. Besides the monks themselves there is also a "tertiary order" of friends, associates, allies, relatives, regular guests, and correspondents—maybe 20 fulltime live-ins and 100 occasional "retreatants."

**Everyone's bewitched but no one cares
we have one universal evil eye to share
like flies beguiled by television's glare
or three ugly sisters with their empty stares.**

**There's always a worldly world and one to flee
into some desert no one else can see.**

(A Word from the Abbot)

A secret unknown to the wordly about the desert: it's a positive pleroma of pleasure compared to the arid deathscape of vespuccian/jerk kultur, that bleeding babylon without the courage of its convictions—seduction without desire—the Universal Mall-safety rules, litigation, crash-worship, spleen, worldwide surveillance. Yes by comparison a dank cave, solitary pine barren, silent summer mountain—the "stupidity of rural life" (Marx)—seems like wallowing in luxury billions couldn't buy. The real ascetics are gritting their teeth in traffic jams, TV/PC screens bathing them in leprosy-light, other people's music, vicious boredom. Anyone who doesn't go postal deserves beatification.

The Rule of the Monastery is No Rule: anarcho-monachism. The monks have adopted a Benedictine identity only because the original foundation was Benedictine. But in fact, they've found some inspiration in St. Benedict's Rule. Once the bits about chastity, obedience, humility, punishment, and excommunication were deleted, they still liked the basic idea. In the original text, they found a description of the "four kinds of monks" including the Sarabaites, which are the worst kind-unschooled by any rule. Their only law is the pleasure of their desires; whatever they wish or choose, they call holy. They consider whatever they dislike unlawful." Half-jesingly, the monks claim to follow the Sarabait Rite.

They've retained Benedictine titles and forms of organization: an Abbot, Canons to assist the Abbot, a Cellarer (logistics and supplies), Provost (ritualist), and Porter (security). They follow the rules of weekly kitchen service and weekly Reader, and also the Rule of One Hemina (1/4 liter) per day allowance of good wine. They wear, both sexes, an adapted version of the Benedictine habit-homespun green—at least on formal occasions.

But aside from monkish play and conviviality what hold them together are common interests. The first and all-embracing one is negation—a desire or need to escape from the vulgar materialist world; to retreat, whether for spiritual or political or even "military" reasons; whether permanently or periodically.

—Letter From the Abbot

When you're beaten Von Clausewitz calls for retreat
rather than senseless going down in defeat
Query: have we retreated far enough?
invisible yet? translucent? gossamer stuff?

Militant monks know when to head for the mountains for a century of boxing practice.

A monastic order founded and decreed
in the hinterland beyond the emerald city
the hidden Imam's jasper isle: a seed exempt from the gaze of the dead and their sterile pity.

Li Po could kick back and unplug the phone
uncork some applejack, feel right at home.

Once I saw green moss growing inside a Dublin omnibus—like Dali's "Rainy Taxi." If science has conquered nature why does it keep beating the dead horse?
The next stage: mail-order monasticism. Text itself as ectoplasmic reverie. Dear Reader: a message from the Abbe: to each their own cinnabar grotto or egyptian cave.

Hocus Pocus means this is the body
just as much puzzle as soul
whatever New Age twaddle seems to work
channeling the old black mole

We know our Blake and Paracelsus. Nobody here but us Nolans. Mushrooms and the voices of the dead: exfoliation of spirits
According to Gustav Meyerink the nausea that overcomes us occasionally even in museums must arise from the fact that sooner or later everything made by humans begins to stink of the charnel house.

The conquistadors forgot that they themselves
were animals not aristotelian elves
"arguing with something Plato said"
or tidying up their vast linnaean shelves

If only our bad karma would permit it
I'd like us to be ornamental hermits
not cranks who can barely keep their logs afloat
or dionysiacs without a sacrificial goat.

There I see us bathed in light in rain
hoping Romanticism didn't die in vain
saying our beads or inviting each other to supper
wreathed in clouds and overcoming pain.

For various motives both practical and theoretical, the Greenfriars have adopted a neo-Luddite approach to tech that owes much to the nearby Dunkers—especially since the Anabaptists' shops and workshops provide the tools and skills needed for a comfortable low-tech life. Moreover, "Whole Earth Catalogue"-styled tech can be used to supplement Dunker resources since the monks have no religious injunctions to observe against zippers or can-openers. They even keep an old pick-up truck for emergencies, though they prefer horses.

SILK uses solar and other off-grid sources of electricity but the monastery and Abbot's House are un-powered and lit by candles and oil lamps. The Sacred Concerts and other monastic events utilize daylight or torchlight, etc. The basic rule of all Luddism, whether religious or secular, is to use only technology that will not "injure the commonality"—therefore they agree to have (on the premises anyway) no computer, no TV, no telephone, nothing to replace human contact and connection with mediated representation (as the Sheriff would say).

Perhaps there's something a bit precious and artificial about this luddery, since the monks are not self-sustaining like the Dunkers or the more successful permaculturists. They've made certain choices on the basis of pleasure and beauty. As the Abbot says, "We're not really renouncing anything... nice. All of us feel the absence of electricity as an immense luxury. Our velvet nights are set with more than stars." Some of the hermits have their own hot tubs.

On the positive side, the Order's common interests center on "lost knowledge." They believe that their research may help to inspire and even direct the growth of a global green spiritual movement. As Universalists, they nevertheless have no truck with any New-Age multi-culti interpretations of "tolerance"; as the Unabomber said, "You can do anything you want—as long as it's unimportant." Rather, they seek certain non-negotiable constellations within all spiritual human manifestations, and on these, they maintain strict intolerance and an unwillingness to compromise.

They're also very interested in secrets, which they define as anything not found on TV or the Internet. The Abbot says, "We should cultivate secrets against the day when the unknown might regain its power."

The brothers and sisters follow their own interests but regular sessions are held for discussion and development of group projects. One major interest for some lies in the "Western occult tradition," especially serious Renaissance hermeticism and alchemy. Other shared research includes Christian ritual, particularly chanting, which is practiced for its "psychedelic" effects (and as rehearsal for Sacred Concerts). Fancy gardening—flowers and herbs for tinctures and distillations—"spagyric medicine." There's a fad for calligraphy and copying manuscripts, which generates a bit of extra income as well. They spend most of their "grant" on books, although they also have an excellent 2' telescope that provides a lot of entertainment. This is an homage to Johannes Kelpius, the German Rosicrucian who founded "The Woman

in the Wilderness" in Pennsylvania in 1694. He brought to America: the first serious telescope, to scan the skies for signs of the coming End!; the first harpsichord; one of the first printing presses. He admired the Indians' religion, and lived in a cave practicing alchemy and composing hymns.

Quilting bees are held on winter evenings with readings from literature and philosophy like the Benedictines—and monks are devoted to viva voce reading—or like the old anarchist Egyptian and Cuban cigar workers, or the radical tailors in 18th century London. Dining well is another shared obsession, at least with the group that cooks and eats in the Abbot's House, who claim inspiration from Rabelais, from Fourier's "Gastrosophy," and chapter one of Brillat-Savarin's *Physiology of Taste*. By contrast, some of the hermits are strict vegetarians or raw foodists, etc.

It may be that some of the monks are engaging in "revolutionary activity"—but what exactly? since they could scarcely be preparing for armed insurgency... who knows? Maybe they're growing mushrooms for the combine, or counterfeiting Euro-dollars, or providing safe caves for anti-global activists on the lam. Maybe they've made a breakthrough in occult science—say, the therapeutic use of hieroglyphic emblems to "de-program" human awareness from media/consumer trance? Or maybe it's all another layer of camouflage, like the famous ghost that haunts the monastery and keeps idle gawkers and tourists away.

The Greenfriars consider themselves committed to certain local things and people because they're living in a certain place and want to remain there. They maintain collegially close relations with some of the elders on the Reservation, and a few pious ecstasies amongst the Sabbatarians, but they also see themselves in the American Romantic tradition, as adherents of the "Religion of Nature" of the Transcendentalists and Hudson River School painters. And needless to say, Sion County is beautiful and relatively unspoiled, at least in the northern mountains. According to...

**In mourning for the idea of the woods
psychic space/time pollution blues
almost as bad as being in love
this thinking about distant mountains and
money
Seems you can't get one without the other
no car no hunt club no socialism
property tax on the taoist hermitage
electromagnetism no peace no quiet
Knowledge of mountains as source of pain
but dreamy (an anaesthetic revelation)
a numbness every bit as beguiling
as real estate itself Atavistic
the summer camp the tactical retreat
astral travel on february nights.**

GIVE IT AWAY

by David Graeber

Pioneering French anthropologist Marcel Mauss studied “gift economies” like those of the Kwakiutl of British Columbia.

A former amateur boxer, he was a burly man with a playful, rather silly manner, the sort of person always juggling a dozen brilliant ideas rather than building a great philosophical system.

Mauss was also a revolutionary socialist. From his student days on, he was a regular contributor to the left press and remained most of his life an active member of the French cooperative movement. He founded and for many years helped run a consumer co-op in Paris; and was often sent on missions to make contact with the movement in other countries (which led him to spend time in Russia after the revolution). Not a Marxist, though he advocated a socialism more in the tradition of Robert Owen or Pierre-Joseph Proudhon and he considered Communists and Social Democrats to be equally misguided in believing that society could be transformed primarily through government action.

The Russian revolution thus left him profoundly ambivalent. While exhilarated by prospects of a genuine socialist experiment, he was outraged by the Bolsheviks' systematic use of terror, their suppression of democratic institutions, and most of all by their “cynical doctrine that the end justifies the means,” which, Mauss concluded, was really just the amoral, rational calculus of the marketplace, slightly transposed.

Mauss's essay on “the gift” was, more than anything, his response to events in Russia—particularly Lenin's New Economic Policy of 1921, which abandoned earlier attempts to abolish commerce. If the market could not simply be legislated away, even in Russia, probably the least monetarized European society, then clearly, Mauss concluded, revolutionaries were going to have to start thinking a lot more seriously about what this “market” actually was, where it came from, and what a viable alternative to it might actually be like.

Mauss's conclusions were startling. First of all, almost everything that “economic science” had to say on the subject of economic history turned out to be entirely untrue. In the beginning, goes the official version, there was barter. People were forced to get what they wanted by directly trading one thing for another. Since this was inconvenient, they eventually invented money as a universal medium of exchange. The invention of further technologies of exchange (credit, banking, stock exchanges) was simply a logical extension.

The problem was, as Mauss was quick to note, there is no reason to believe a society based on barter has ever existed.

Instead, what anthropologists were discovering were societies where economic life was based on utterly different principles, and most objects moved back and forth as gifts—and

almost everything we would call “economic” behavior was based on a pretense of pure generosity and a refusal to calculate exactly who had given what to whom.

Such “gift economies” could on occasion become highly competitive, but when they did it was in exactly the opposite way from our own: Instead of vying to see who could accumulate the most, the winners were the ones who managed to give the most away. In some notorious cases, such as the Kwakiutl of British Columbia, this could lead to dramatic contests of liberality, where ambitious chiefs would try to outdo one another by distributing thousands of silver bracelets, Hudson Bay blankets or Singer sewing machines, and even by destroying wealth—sinking famous heirlooms in the ocean, or setting huge piles of wealth on fire and daring their rivals to do the same.

All of this may seem very exotic. But as Mauss also asked: How alien is it, really? Why is it that, when one receives a gift from a friend (a drink, a dinner invitation, a compliment), one feels somehow obliged to reciprocate in kind? Why is it that a recipient of generosity often somehow feels reduced if he or she cannot? Are these not examples of

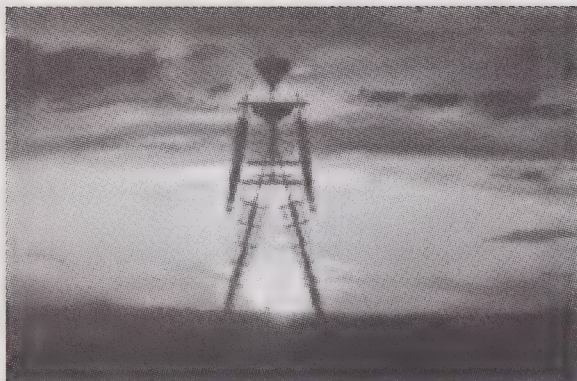
universal human feelings? Mauss felt these very different impulses and moral standards are the real basis for the appeal of alternative visions and socialist policies.

In gift economies, Mauss argued, exchanges do not have the impersonal qualities of the capitalist marketplace: In fact, even when objects of great value change hands, what really matters is the relations between the people. As a result, everything becomes personally charged, even property: In gift economies, the most famous objects of wealth—heirloom necklaces, weapons, feather cloaks—always seem to develop personalities of their own.

Mauss was never entirely sure what his practical conclusions were. The Russian experience convinced him that buying and selling could not simply be eliminated in a modern society, at least “in the foreseeable future,” but a market ethos could. Work could be co-operatized, effective social security guaranteed, and, gradually, a new ethos created whereby the only possible excuse for accumulating wealth was the ability to give it all away. The result: a society whose highest values would be “the joy of giving in public, the delight in generous artistic expenditure, the pleasure of hospitality in the public or private feast.”

David Graeber has written, *Toward an Anthropological Theory of Values: The False Coin of Our Own Dreams*, 2001 (a synthesis of economic, political, and cultural theories of value) and *Fragments of an Anarchist Anthropology*, 2004





A FESTIVAL IN THE DESERT

BURNING MAN

It's like the scene in the film, *The Matrix*, where they show Zion, and there are thousands and thousands of people, only these are my people, these are our people, these are the beautiful, awake, inspired, creative people who live at the fringes of civilization.

I have just left Black Rock City, the site of Burning Man, a yearly arts festival and temporary autonomous zone based on radical self-expression, and find myself in the paradoxical situation of being inspired to give written form to things that are utterly inexpressible.

In the desert of Nevada, Black Rock City is constructed entirely of art. It exists in material form for only one week in August every year, and then it disappears, as though into the ethers, its citizens dispersed to various faraway places.

Black Rock City is the most beautiful thing I have ever witnessed that was created by human hands. Much of the art is mobile. Giant vehicles turned into pirate ships, space shuttles, sharks, giant catapillars, anything you could imagine, roam the *playa* in droves, all flammable and ready for the torch.

I could catalogue a list of incredible works of mad, creative genius. But even if I could successfully describe these things to you, I could never convey the greater sum of it all, the total immersion into another reality, one in which everything you see, do, or encounter is a work of beauty, created out of love, and given freely and abundantly to all.

Everything is Given Freely

Giving is a crucial aspect of life there. Hakim Bey said that in an enlightened society, the basic transaction of the economy would be the gift, rather than the sale. Black Rock City is based on this principle. Once you have paid to get in (and though it's a lot of money, it is the best \$250 I've ever spent), there is no exchange of money allowed. The only exception to this is the sale of ice and chai at the main camp, whose proceeds all go to local charities. Actually, one day, a large crowd staged a mock demonstration demanding free chai that led to the temporary takeover of the tea booth.

But aside from these two exceptions, no money is exchanged. Everything is given freely. There are massage booths, popcorn stands (more like a popcorn temple, actually), insane rides, snow cones, sexual healing work, open bars, hookah lounges, foot-washing stations, provided free to all.

People give art they've created just for the occasion. The fact that, for once in our lives, money is not only unimportant, it is utterly useless, is an incredibly liberating feeling.

With its sense of total freedom, the festival is the ultimate

Temporary Autonomous Zone, as Hakim Bey describes, and is the most beautiful and functional display of anarchy I've ever seen. There are guidelines and parameters of conduct within the city, mostly related to safety or to the preservation of the *playa*.

However, within those parameters anything can happen and does happen. "Do What Thou Will. . ." is a fundamental of life during the event, though it is always tempered with a deeply felt sense of individual responsibility and a general atmosphere of love and benevolent enthusiasm.

These are my people

The most important thing I took away from my experience at Burning Man is the sense of community. When they burn the Man—the huge, stories high effigy—after a long period during which several hundred fire performers do a tightly choreographed fire dance, every one rushes the fire and circles around it. And, you look around you, and think, "My God!, there are so many of us." It's like the scene in the film, *The Matrix*, where they show Zion, and there are thousands and thousands of people, only these are my people, these are our people, these are the beautiful, awake, inspired, creative people who live at the fringes of civilization. And, you realize that we are a nation of such people. And of course, for every one who goes to Burning Man, there are thousands who would like to but can't, and you realize what a force we are.

The whole week, I kept thinking that this was what the future of our species can be. Creating a city made of art—bringing fire and ritual and technology and music and sexuality and creative play together and creating a new paradigm—transcends the ethical questions of our current dependency on the old order.

Before I went, a friend described it as Mecca for freaks. I understand that now. My first Burning Man happened concurrently with (and perhaps was the spiritual antidote to) the Republican Convention where the current "president" accepts his role as the king who would sacrifice the life of his nation to serve himself.

To those who have never been, I urge you to make the pilgrimage to Black Rock City. It will renew your faith in the future, in the creative spirit, in the truth that anything is possible.

—PanDoor

Wildcat:

Dodge Truck, June 1974

30 years later

This year marks the 30th anniversary of publication of the pamphlet Wildcat: Dodge Truck, June 1974, written and produced by several of the people who became the core of the Fifth Estate collective the next year when it was transformed into an overtly council communist, and then, anarchist publication. A short excerpt is reprinted below.

The wildcat strike at an obscure Chrysler production facility in suburban Detroit occurred amidst the generalized spirit of rebellion of early 1970s that had seeped far deeper into society than what is usually characterized as an era of college and youth-centered protest. The pamphlet tells the story of the illegal strike with analysis of the unions, the state and the left, but mostly it is a tale of exuberance where workers shook off the constraints of authority and work.

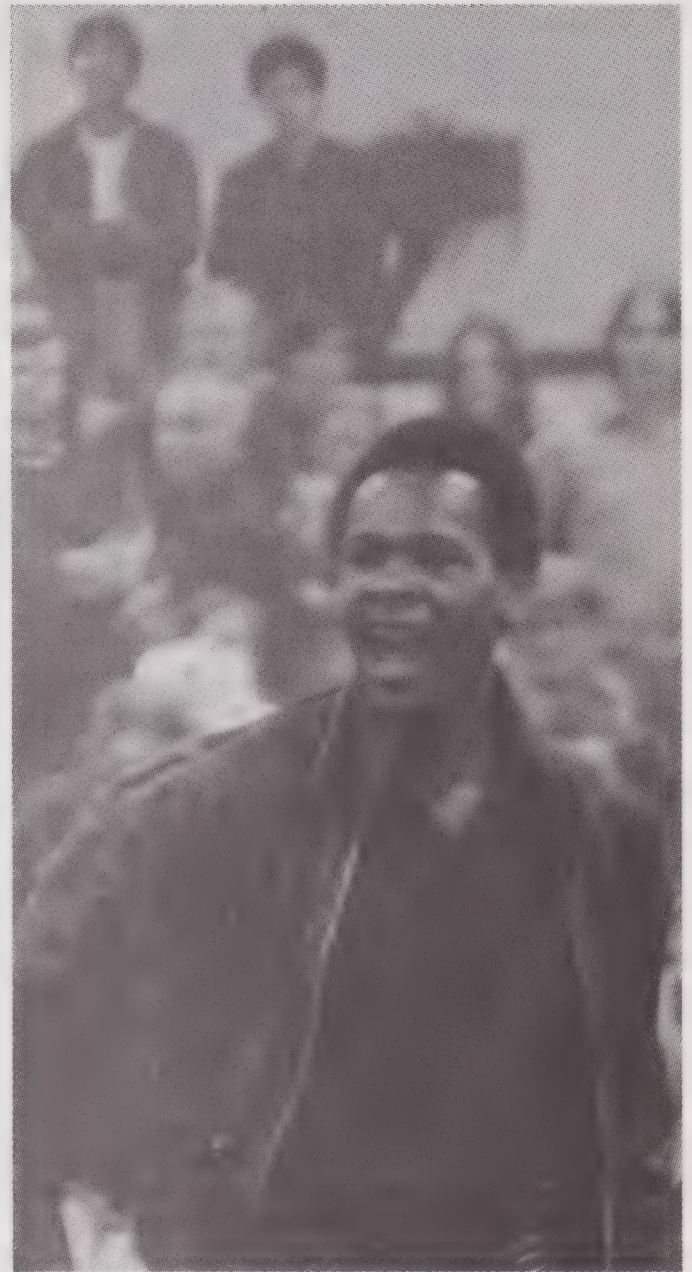
It was printed at the Detroit Print Co-op and distributed through Black & Red which still supplies bulk copies; contact them at PO Box 02374, Detroit MI 448202. Individual copies are available through FE Books.

From the introduction:

Those of us who cooperated on the publication of this pamphlet did so because the wildcat strike at the Chrysler Truck facility, June 11-14, 1974, struck a raw nerve in us.

We were excited by the collective decision of thousands of Chrysler employees to deny the authority of daily wage labor and, for even four days, to say no to the demands of the alarm clock, the production line, bosses, union bureaucrats, judges, and cops. In a society where daily activity serves so much the interests of others and so little our own, the efforts of so many to reclaim even short-run control over their lives seemed worth writing about, giving the event consideration and drawing conclusions as we saw them.

We don't intend this publication to perpetuate the process wherein "authorities" or "experts" tell others what reality consists of; this is done daily in the media and works to keep us in the status of passive observers of our lives while the rich, the famous, and pop-stars are projected as the "important"



people and the real actors of history, and the creators of events. This time it was different. Events were shaped and determined by those who usually are only spectators.

We are not a "political" group. We are not trying to "organize" anyone into a political party or "movement." We are not trying to exhort others to greater heights of activity. We, two auto workers, a printer, a student, a teamster, a secretary, and two unemployed, want to do the same thing in our lives as the Dodge Truck strikers did in theirs: free ourselves from the tyranny of the workplace; stop being forced to sell our labor to others; stop others from having control over our lives.

But four days is no good. It only whets the appetite for what is possible. What can be done for four days can be done permanently. We want to live our lives for ourselves.

We are Millard Berry, Ralph Franklin, Alan Franklin, Cathy Kauflin, Marilyn Werbe, Richard Wieseke, Peter Werbe.

From the conclusion:

What do all these varied means of resistance [used in the strike] signify? An easier way to answer that question would be to discover what they do not signify. Workers were not searching for better representation from the current authorities, management, and/or the union; nor were they searching for new leaders to become new bosses, and still go to work. They were not looking for slight improvements in working conditions.

"Everything," offered one young exuberant worker when asked what he wanted during the peak of the strike action.

"I just don't want to work," moaned another during the first few depressed days of the return to work after the strike.

Horrors! How do you formulate these demands into a political program? During the strike, many people railed on about Watergate, the fuel crisis, inflation, the UAW sell-out, and the "system" in general, as well as specific grievances about the factory. The rejection of the job's domination of our lives and the political content of the uprising were inseparable from the protest over working conditions. They did, in fact, comprise the core of the anger.

The [1973] Dodge Truck uprising and the day-to-day acts of resistance against the work process can have only one underlying cause: a generalized rebellion against forced wage-labor. The implicit realization constantly confronts us that daily activity at the work place consists of bought-and-sold labor; activity controlled by the rich and powerful for their purposes, and that much of the value created through wage labor is given to far-away stockholders rather than to the producers.

Work under capitalism will continue to distort our lives and rob us of its potential until rebellion spreads throughout the entire class of those who must sell their labor each day. The destruction of capitalist social relationships would mean the opening of a new world where work, art, creativity, and even hobbies would lose their status of separate categories and be merged into one, all at the command of each individual.

Capitalism doesn't work for us, and each day is powerful testimony to that.

The Dodge Truck strike gave us a glimmering of what can be done. Let's do it all.

INCIDENT: The wildcat strike had come and gone and Chrysler was getting even with its employees for being so presumptuous as to call an end to production for four days.

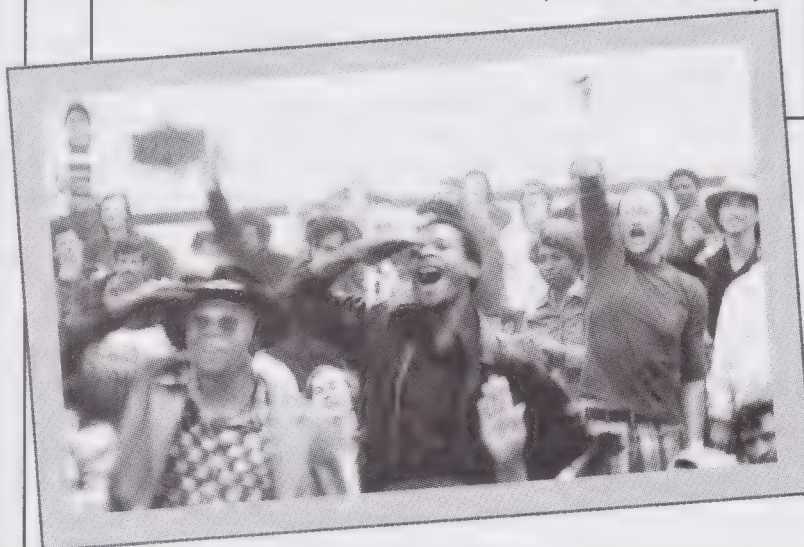
On the first day of [return to] production, a brief movement to walkout at the end of eight hours failed. But later that week, the line ground to a halt at precisely 2:50 PM on the day shift—the normal quitting time for eight hours. Circuit breakers flashed open indicating something jammed in the line while short-haired, white-skirted supervisors panicked and raced to correct a very damaging situation. Idle workers laid back and laughed as maintenance men and supervisors tore open a gearbox for the line driving motor and dug out a power steering pump that belonged about 75 feet further down the line. When the same incident happened at the same time on Saturday, even management was convinced that it was not an accident, but there was little they could do but fix it and curse.

A typical executive would demand to know, "Why would these workers destroy the very means of their livelihood; it just shows what lazy, stupid, irresponsible people they are." A union rep might say, "If something is wrong they should go through the proper channels of the grievance procedure, otherwise it destroys the authority of their elected representatives."

Sabotage is a way of life in any large industrial operation, especially in auto plants where the moving line dominates everything. The word itself comes for the French "sabot" meaning a wooden shoe to be thrown into the machinery. That dates back to the earliest mass production.

Sabotage is not necessarily an individual act, nor is it random, nor is it really spontaneous. The methods are infinite and no corporation can protect itself from angry employees who take it upon themselves to change the conditions of their jobs. A more appropriate term might be "direct action." It is an act of enforcing workers' demands on the company, not an act of petitioning a mediating authority to plead their cause.

—photos: Millard Berry



NIETZSCHE

AND THE

ANARCHISTS



by Spencer Sunshine

John Moore was a controversial but intriguing English anarchist writer who passed away of a heart attack in October 2002 at the age of 45. He was the author of such short books as *Anarchy & Ecstasy*, *Lovebite*, and *The Book of Levelling*, and widely-read essays such as “A Primitivist Primer” and “Maximalist Anarchism/Anarchist Maximalism.” His “The Appeal of Anarchy” appeared on the back cover of *Fifth Estate* in the 1990s. When he died, he left behind an uncompleted anthology: *I Am Not A Man, I Am Dynamite! Friedrich Nietzsche and the Anarchist Tradition*. It featured essays from a dozen writers, from six countries, on the historical and conceptual relationships between Nietzsche and anarchism. I inherited the project the next year, and finally—eight years after its initiation—the book is finally complete and will be published in December by Autonomedia. I want to offer the following historical research, culled from both the anthology and elsewhere, to contribute to the discussion that will undoubtedly follow the publication of this work.

The proposal to combine Nietzsche and anarchism must sound audacious to many people. Even if one doesn’t hold to the old belief that the “working class” (whoever that might be today) are the only ones who can make revolutionary change, wasn’t Nietzsche an influence on the fascists, and an individualist who championed the right of the strong to rule over the weak? And doesn’t Nietzsche himself repeatedly denounce the anarchist movement of his day, calling them “dogs” and accusing them of *ressentiment*? Without consulting Nietzsche’s works themselves in an attempt to “prove” or “disprove” whether he is compatible with anarchism or not, I believe that a more fruitful way to approach this proposed conjunction is to look at the historical record of how left-wing anarchists have approached Nietzsche. The surprising answer is that many of them quite liked him, including the “classical anarchists;” in fact, some of them even used his ideas to justify anarchist beliefs about class struggle.

The list is not limited to culturally-oriented anarchists such as Emma Goldman, who gave dozens of lectures about Nietzsche and baptized him as an honorary anarchist. Pro-Nietzschean anarchists also include prominent Spanish CNT-FAI members in

the 1930s such as Salvador Seguí and anarcho-feminist Frederica Montseny, anarcho-syndicalist militants like Rudolf Rocker, and even the younger Murray Bookchin, who cited Nietzsche’s conception of the “transvaluation of values” in support of the Spanish anarchist project.

Misogyny, Elitism, Disdain, & Hatred

There were many things that drew anarchists to Nietzsche: his hatred of the state; his disgust for the mindless social behavior of “herds”; his (almost pathological) anti-Christianity; his distrust of the effect of both the market and the State on cultural production; his desire for an “overman”—that is, for a new human who was to be neither master nor slave; his praise of the ecstatic and creative self, with the artist as his prototype, who could say, “Yes” to the self-creation of a new world on the basis of nothing; and his forwarding of the “transvaluation of values” as source of change, as opposed to a Marxist conception of class struggle and the dialectic of a linear history.

Of course, in doing this, the anarchists also conveniently forgot his misogyny, his elitism, and his disdain for those who worked for social justice—as well as his own hatred of them! But then the fascists forgot Nietzsche’s hatred of German nationalism; his admiration for the Jews; his advocating of racial intermarriage; his disgust of *ressentiment* (of which Hitler is the personification of *par excellence*); and his disdain of the State, the market and the herd mentality, all of which the fascist system depended on. Nietzsche-positive left-wing anarchism is most clearly represented by Emma Goldman. She edited the magazine *Mother Earth* for 12 years until the US government arrested her for anti-draft activities in 1917 and deported her to the Soviet Union two years later. *Mother Earth* was common ground for anarcho-communists, individualists, mutualists, syndicalists and the many avant-garde artists who saw anarchism as a political extension of their beliefs (in much the same way that post-WWII counter-culturalists would do the same). The magazine, and Goldman, heavily promoted Nietzsche; not only did they print articles popularizing and discussing his ideas, but you could order Nietzsche’s complete works from their mail-order bookstore.

In her autobiography *Living My Life*, Goldman wrote about her

first encounter with the works of Nietzsche in the 1890s. "The magic of his language, the beauty of his vision, carried me to undreamed-of heights. I longed to devour every line of his writings. . ." She also wrote that "Nietzsche was not a social theorist but a poet, a rebel and innovator. His aristocracy was neither of birth nor of purse; it was of the spirit. In that respect, Nietzsche was an anarchist, and all true anarchists were aristocrats." As Leigh Starcross details in *I Am Not A Man, I Am Dynamite!*, Goldman popularized Nietzsche's ideas in lecture tours and used many of his conceptions about morality and the State in her writings. However, she always combined his championing of the self-creating individual with a kind of Kropotkinist anarcho-communism.

Goldman wasn't the only anarchist to combine Nietzsche with Kropotkin, though. Alan Antliff documents (also in *I Am Not A Man, I Am Dynamite!*) how the Indian art critic and anti-imperialist Ananda Coomaraswamy combined Nietzsche's individualism and sense of spiritual renewal with both Kropotkin's economics and with Asian idealist religious thought. This combination was offered as a basis for the opposition to British colonization as well as to industrialization.

Kropotkin himself, however, was no great fan of Nietzsche. Kropotkin's few published mentions of him are curt and he clearly does not see him (or Stirner) as congruent with his perspective. But Kropotkin took his elaboration to the grave with him, dying before completing the last chapter of his *Ethics* which was to be on Stirner, Nietzsche, Tolstoy and others.

The Spanish anarchists also mixed their class politics with Nietzschean inspiration. Murray Bookchin, in *The Spanish Anarchists*, describes prominent CNT-FAI member Salvador Seguí as "an admirer of Nietzschean individualism, of the superhombre to whom 'all is permitted.'" Bookchin, in his 1973 introduction to Sam Dolgoff's *The Anarchist Collectives*, even describes the reconstruction of society by the workers as a Nietzschean project. He says that "workers must see themselves as human beings, not as class beings; as creative personalities, not as 'proletarians,' as self-affirming individuals, not as 'masses'. . . (the) economic component must be humanized precisely by bringing an 'affinity of friendship' to the work process, by diminishing the role of onerous work in the lives of producers, indeed by a total 'transvaluation of values' (to use Nietzsche's phrase) as it applies to production and consumption as well as social and personal life."

Another CNT-FAI member influenced by Nietzsche was Frederica Montseny, an editor of *La Revista Blanca* who later achieved infamy as one of the four anarchists who accepted cabinet positions in the Spanish Popular Front government. Nietzsche and Stirner—as well as the playwright Ibsen and anarchist-geographer Elisee Reclus—were her favorite writers, according to Richard Kern (in *Red Years/Black Years: A Political History of Spanish Anarchism, 1911-1937*). Kerr says she held that the "emancipation of women would lead to a quicker realization of the social revolution" and that "the revolution against sexism would have to come from intellectual and militant 'future-women.' According to this Nietzschean concept of Federica Montseny's, women could realize through art and

literature the need to revise their own roles."

Rudolf Rocker was yet another anarchist admirer of Nietzsche. Rocker, a German-born anarchist, had moved to England in 1895 and became a well-known union organizer among Yiddish-speaking Jewish workers there. A proponent of anarcho-syndicalism, in 1922 he helped form the AIT (International Workers' Association), the coordinating body for anarcho-syndicalist unions. Rocker invokes Nietzsche repeatedly in his tome *Nationalism and Culture*, citing him especially to back up his claims that nationalism and state power have a destructive influence on culture, since "Culture is always creative," but "power is never creative." Rocker even ends his book with a Nietzsche quote.

The Artist as model for the revolutionary subject

Lastly, the influence of Nietzsche on the pro-Situ milieu should not be underrated. The Situationists are often mistaken for anarchists, but they were actually a combination of the ideas of several avant-garde currents (including Dada, Surrealism, and Lettrism) with the Hegelian-influenced "western" Marxism of Georg Lukacs, Henri Lefebvre and others. (For Guy Debord's own views on anarchism, see theses 91-94 of *Society of the Spectacle*). According to Jonathan Purkis, John Moore claimed that the Situationist influence marked "a second wave of anarchist thought," the first major theoretical shift from "classical" anarchism.

One of the most important shifts in this was an ontological switch: whereas Marx had seen human nature as being essentially defined by work (he lays this out explicitly in his 1844 manuscripts), the Situationists saw humanity as being essentially ecstatic and creative. They, like Nietzsche, took the artist, and not the worker, as their model for the new revolutionary subject. Those who followed in the pro-Situ tradition, such as Hakim Bey, have seen kinship with Nietzsche on this basis. And Fredy Perlman would have appreciated the philosopher's advice in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* to avoid all "unconditional people" who "look sourly at life," for "they have heavy feet and sultry hearts: they do not know how to dance."

One, it seems, does not need to combine Nietzsche and anarchism: they are already joined, and we have already inherited the fruit of their union.

For further reading about the political reception of Nietzsche: Although not specifically about anarchism, I highly recommend Steve Aschheim's *The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany, 1890-1990*.

As we go to press, *I Am Not A Man, I Am Dynamite!* Friedrich Nietzsche and the Anarchist Tradition is in the latter stages of production. As soon as it is available, we will have copies for sale in The Barn.

Mumia re-examines history of the Black Panther Party

By John Brinker and Doug Graves

We Want Freedom: A life in the Black Panther Party

by Mumia Abu-Jamal South End Press: Cambridge, 2004

In his new book *We Want Freedom*, acclaimed activist Mumia Abu-Jamal has re-examined the history of the Black Panther Party (BPP) and has situated them in a broader history of Black resistance for a new generation to learn from their successes and failures.

A journalist from Philadelphia, Abu-Jamal has been on death row since 1982 for allegedly shooting police officer Daniel Faulkner. Years later, his radio remarks and other writings reach a relatively large audience through independent media, and his cause has become nearly synonymous with radical left activism in the US today.

As a teenager, Abu-Jamal was a founding member of the Philadelphia Chapter of the Black Panther Party. In this book, he fleshes out his carefully researched history with reminiscences of his involvement with the Panthers in Philly, Oakland, and New York. This helps to create a work that has not only academic value, but emotional depth as well; Abu-Jamal accomplished this feat in part by discussing in some detail the daily lives of Panthers.

We Want Freedom begins by outlining the history of armed Black struggle in the US. Positing this as a more radical—and deeper—current of resistance than the celebrated nonviolence of the civil rights movement, Abu-Jamal demonstrates that the Black Panther Party was far from an aberration.

Black armed resistance and Black nationalism predated the founding of the US and have continued from generation to generation, up to the founding of the Panthers and to the present day. Abu-Jamal contrasts Malcolm X and the Panthers with Martin Luther King's well-known dream, thus reminding us that the history we have been taught is full of intentional omissions.

The Black Panther Party for Self-Defense was founded in 1966 in Oakland, CA by Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale, two college students, who had been deeply affected by the ideas of Mao, Malcolm X, and Frantz Fanon, not to mention their firsthand experience of urban Black life under a racist government. Due to the popularity of its ideas and programs, the BPP spread rapidly in Oakland, and then to most major cities in the US. The Panthers' platform appeared in a self-published newspaper that was sold on street corners and in bookstores all over the country.

The philosophy of the Panthers was far from the rigid, nationalist ideology many today associate them with. The term "Black nationalism" hardly does justice to the full range of Panther thought. "While the idea of revolutionary nationalism held sway for a time," Abu-Jamal tells us, "it had to give way to a kind of revolutionary internationalism." Newton quickly abandoned the concept of a separate Black nation within US borders and looked to forge ties with similar

movements around the world. The Panthers, through declarations of solidarity or active support, aligned themselves with liberation movements in the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, and Asia (even going so far as to offer Panther troops to North Vietnam). Newton went even further by proposing a Black movement that was "intercommunal," acting in solidarity with movements that were not necessarily nationalist in nature, like those of Chicano, Asian, and white radicals within the US, including feminist and queer groups.

While many latter-day critics might note the problematic influence of Marxism and Maoism, Abu-Jamal explains: "Although it has rarely been observed in these ideological terms, the Black Panther Party was a Malcolmist party far more than it was a Marxist one. Though all Panthers owned and were required to study Mao's Red Book, and the Party claimed to adhere to the principles of Marxism-Leninism, few Panthers actually pored through turgid, laborious translations of key Marxist texts."

These debts to Malcolm are as much psychological, emotional, and spiritual as purely political. While the competing ideologies of nationalism and internationalism impacted many revolutionary movements, the Panthers were more known for their actions than their theories. Abu-Jamal's book helps map these distinctions.

Despite its advanced ideals, sexism and authoritarianism remained major problems in the BPP leadership. In trying to contextualize these problems, Abu-Jamal asserts that the BPP's recruitment of those most damaged by racism and capitalism guaranteed that "...the least enlightened on gender issues would be widely recruited into the organization." Some may find his treatment of these problems apologist, but to his credit, he lets women speak for themselves, giving space for the oral histories of several women whose experiences reflect the complexity of Panthers' approaches to gender.

An FBI program called COINTELPRO, as many know, brought down the Panthers through an extended campaign of illegal thuggery. The lengths to which the FBI went to destroy this movement speak volumes, not only about the violent extremes to which the US government will go in order to silence dissent, but also about the seriousness with which the BPP was viewed by the government. Through COINTELPRO, the FBI used infiltration, "brownmail" (letters purporting to be from one Panther to another, but actually penned by FBI agents in order to foster mutual suspicion), and outright murder, often committed by convicted criminals in exchange for leniency.

The eventual result was a split between Panthers in the East and those on the West Coast. The BPP dissolved into several bickering factions that fought each other (sometimes violently) for legitimacy. However, the legacy of the BPP includes many groups; Abu-Jamal even mentions the Anarchist People of Color (APOC) movement and the work of "anarchist panther" Ashanti Alston and criticizes the New

Black Panther Party for ignoring the teachings of Huey and characterizes them as “an emergence of the Nation of Islam under a different name.”

The first and most obvious lesson the Panthers leave us is never to underestimate the duplicity of the US government. Panthers “didn’t think that they were important enough to warrant that... level of government repression,” but their modesty created a fatal blind spot. While COINTELPRO has been filed away as an historical anomaly, the Department of Justice’s war on dissent has continued unabated, as Abu-Jamal’s 22 years on death row attest. The book also describes the Panthers’ attempts to lead a class-conscious, multi-racial revolutionary movement in the United States. Finally, the egotism and authoritarianism in Panther leadership created the deep fractures along which it eventually split.

The Panthers’ success stemmed both from its theory and its practice. The radical stance taken by the party appealed to a population that had tired of reformism, and communities could easily see that the Panthers meant business. Even so, most of the BPP’s success could be attributed to its emphasis on community service. From its Police-alert Patrols to its Free Breakfast for Children Program, from free schooling to free health clinics, busing, clothing, and housing, “[f]or most Panthers, our lives in the Party were dedicated to community service,” Abu-Jamal remembers. The inability of many subsequent groups to mobilize those most oppressed reflects their unwillingness to engage in difficult and unglamorous work.

For long-time supporters of Mumia’s cause, *We Want Freedom* provides a valuable glimpse of his radicalization as a young man. For those new to the study of Black resistance, this book makes a great starting point, and suggests many avenues to explore. While some anti-authoritarians might take issue with the near-saint-like status that Huey Newton had among the Panthers on the street, this story eloquently explains Newton’s politics and persona. For anarchists, this book—better than anything in the current platformist milieu—sheds light on the appeal that an effective political organization has as a viable means to confront capitalism, imperialism, and the state. For white readers, this book clearly challenges us to confront our own internalized white supremacy and deal with the lasting critique that revolution will never come until we are willing “to do all that [is] necessary to break asunder from [our] Mother Country.”

By allowing many voices from the Panther

milieu to speak through his book, Abu-Jamal demonstrates the breadth and complexity of this important—and often misunderstood—movement.

In this generally inspiring and unapologetic history, Abu-Jamal proceeds honestly and modestly, refusing to dodge some of the more problematic elements of the Panther legacy. Near the close, the long quote from Afeni Shakur, mother of the assassinated rapper Tupac Shakur and former Panther prisoner, is as much about owning up to idealistic ignorance and arrogance as it is about the heroism and hope the Panthers posed. And appropriately, Abu-Jamal ends the book not in the past but in the future: “The Black Panther Party may indeed be history, but the legacy that gave rise to it is not.”

Despite overwhelming evidence of his innocence, Mumia Abu-Jamal remains on death row. It is for his freedom and for all our freedom that we still must fight.



MORE DANGEROUS THAN A THOUSAND RIOTERS

"My conception of the strike of the future is not to strike and go out and starve but to strike and remain in and take possession of the necessary property of production."

Lucy Parsons: Freedom, Equality & Solidarity, Writings & Speeches, 1878-1937, Charles H. Kerr, Chicago, 2003

As a cop once said during her lifetime, Lucy Parsons is "more dangerous than a thousand rioters." So strong was her anti-authoritarian presence that 62 years after her death, the revolutionary spirit of Lucy Parsons (1853-1942) continues to arouse the ire of the Chicago police.

Recently, a new generation of "organized bandits," as she once referred to the police, vociferously objected to a proposal last Spring by the Chicago Parks District to name a small park on the northwest side of the city (where Lucy once lived) in her honor. In some ways, the unabated vehemence of this continuing police vendetta against her says more about her legacy as an anarchist than a municipally-financed park ever could.

Though she is most well known as the wife of Albert Parsons, one of the legendary 1886 Haymarket martyrs, Lucy Parsons was a formidable agitator in her own right. This dramatically provocative woman of Mexican, African, and Native American ancestry, devoted her entire life toward addressing the problems of the poor, achieving equal rights for women, and abolishing wage slavery, private property, and the State. Many of her insightful analyses culled from these struggles—and still relevant today—are included in this illuminating anthology of her work.

In the biographical introduction, editor Gale Ahrens contends that sexist efforts to see her only in relation to her husband dismiss this legendary freedom fighter's independent contribution to radical history and are merely attempts "to soften the sting of Lucy Parsons's burning truths."

In her 1905 speech at the Founding Convention of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), for example, Parsons predicted the sit-down actions of the '30s when she stated, "My conception of the strike of the future is not to strike and go out and starve but to strike and remain in and take possession of the necessary property of production."

Though not included in this volume, her notoriously controversial 1884 essay, "To Tramps," in which Lucy urged the poverty-stricken to "learn the use of explosives!" rather than surrender to their despair and commit suicide, is evaluated by both Ahrens and the author of the *Afterward*, radical activist/historian Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz.

In addition to including all of Lucy's documented IWW-related material and some of her personal stories about the Haymarket events, this book also features her opinions on what was then called "the woman question." Lucy considered

women's oppression to be exclusively rooted in their economic dependence on men.

To that effect, in the 1880s, she founded the Chicago Working Women's Union, which demanded equal pay for equal work and even advocated that women be paid wages for housework. As to voting, like her colleague Emma Goldman, Parsons was not fooled by the illusionary promises of electoral politics and refused to participate in the suffrage movement. "The fact is money and not votes is what rules the people," Lucy declared. "The ballot is only the paper veil that hides the tricks."

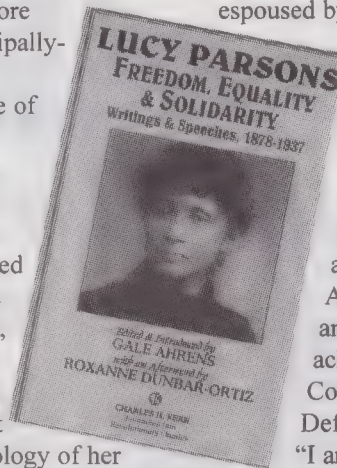
Yet, while she supported reproductive choice for women, she remained steadfastly opposed to the notions of free love espoused by Goldman. Another contentious issue that has reverberations in current political discourse is the nature of Parsons' involvement with the Communist Party. In the *Encyclopedia of the American Left*, her sole biographer, Carolyn Ashbaugh declared, "After years of CP association, she joined in 1939." Outraged by what she perceives as being "a careless and unfounded assertion," Ahrens seeks to redress the tendency by Ashbaugh to downplay Parsons' commitment to anarchy. For example, while Lucy once publicly acknowledged being "connected with the Communists [through the International Labor Defense]," in the same 1930 speech, she also declared, "I am an anarchist, because anarchism carries the very germ of liberty in its womb."

The previously hard-to-find material to be found in *Lucy Parsons: Freedom, Equality & Solidarity* is geared toward an audience seeking primary sources. The book indisputably recognizes her substantial contribution to the cultures of resistance and liberation that continue to kick up dust in the new millennium. Though her language style is somewhat outdated, with a little imagination the reader can feel the inspiring spark of Parsons' fiery disposition become a roaring blaze of verbal rebellion.

The actions that Lucy's words fomented then continue to threaten such present day organizations as Chicago's Police Union. However, despite persistent objections, the Lucy Ella Gonzales Parsons Park was approved. Yet, "the irony," noted Stephen Craig in an April 8 letter to the *Chicago Sun-Times*, "is that Lucy Parsons would probably have spit on any honor proffered by any government agency."

True, but as a friend of mine, who is a lifelong Chicago resident, warily concluded with regard to whether there was any redeeming value in this tepid civic gesture, "better Lucy than some real estate developer or capitalist."

—Sheila Nopper



New APOC Book

Our Culture, Our Resistance: People of Color Speak Out on Anarchism, Race, Class and Gender. 2 volumes.

Available for free download at:
www.illegalvoices.org

Because of the visionary volatility and deep diversity of the two volumes, I strongly recommend the writings by Anarchist People of Color compiled in *Our Culture, Our Resistance*.

Reading these texts offers a bumpy ride; taken as a whole, the collected prose cobbles together a wide tapestry of voices from thoughtful narrative to raw rant, from ideological treatise to conversational reflection. Theoretically and politically, these texts cover quite the territory and as a group refuse to be pigeon-holed.

Clearly written for a wide audience, these essays spare no feelings in the general critique of white activists. But the authors provide no 10-point-plan for allies; in fact, it's quite clear that learning effective solidarity is our job: our comrades of color will not hold our hands or coddle our insecurities. Learning to be allies, training ourselves to move past tokenizing gestures takes more than reading a book. But this book will challenge and inspire, that's for sure.

Since 2003, APOC have come together and identified as a movement. Even as these volumes draw inspiration from sources that are not explicitly anarchist, anti-authoritarian politics provide the unbreakable thread. Of all the unexpected places to find context, a unique spiritual focus finds its way from the margins to make an impact on the overall flavor of the essays, reminding all of us that living love and respect of comrades is more important than having the correct line.

—Sunfrog

No Apologies from Leftist Prisoner

No Surrender: Writings from an Anti-Imperialist Political Prisoner. By David Gilbert. Abraham Guillen Press, Montreal, 2004, 283pp.

From David Gilbert, formerly of the Weather Underground Organization (WUO), comes this collection of essays as uncompromising as its title suggests. The book compiles a miscellany of Gilbert's writings from prison since his arrest in 1981, starting with his first court statement, wrapping up (perhaps predictably) with some "post-9/11" musings. Gilbert was captured in an attempted armed robbery of a Brinks truck, the proceeds of which were meant to fund the Black Liberation Army, a revolutionary nationalist organization.

The articles here tackle a raft of thorny issues and outline many of Gilbert's positions in clear language. Various symptoms of capitalism – racism, environmental destruction, and

news & reviews

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the global trade regime – are accurately described and diagnosed. Not surprisingly, the subject that elicits Gilbert's most passionate prose is that of political prisoners, and some of the best material here deals with these prisoners and the issues that affect them the most.

Possibly the most valuable pieces here are Gilbert's autobiographical excerpts, near the beginning and end of the book, dealing with his youth, his move from liberalism to leftism, and his involvement in Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and the WUO.

What one hopes for here is an attempt on Gilbert's part to articulate his position as a supporter of nationalist causes. Is Gilbert's nationalism and use of communist-style terminology evidence that he's a relic of the 60's? His critique centers on capitalism and imperialism in the abstract, worthy targets to be sure, but Gilbert's thought shows few influences beyond familiar leftist rhetoric.

—John Brinker

Ross Winn: Digging up a Tennessee Anarchist

These days, knowing your local history is often relegated to remembering the name of the rich man or general whose statue is anchored in some downtown park.

Finding the buried stories of your hometown's fiery radicals is another task altogether! In Tennessee, a project has been underway in the last couple of years to research and compile the story of one of our own forgotten stars: the anarchist publisher Ross Winn.

Winn dedicated his life to publishing radical newspapers for over 25 years until 1912, always on a shoestring budget but always with passion. Born in Dallas, Winn spent most of his life in then-rural Mt. Juliet, Tennessee, only about 40 miles West of Pumpkin Hollow. His papers were distributed all over the country, and writers like Lucy Parsons, Joseph Labadie and Emma Goldman graced his pages, but Winn himself has been all but forgotten... until now.

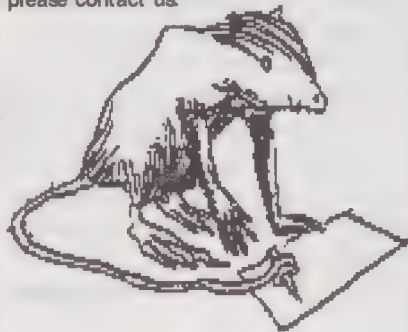
We've just completed a 'zine which focuses on Ross' life and work! Included is a revised version of our biographical sketch of Winn (published in its original form right here in *Fifth Estate*, Spring 2004), an introduction by Bob Helms, writings by Sunfrog and Ally Greenhead, drawings by Erik Ruin, articles from Winn's papers, and even a couple of new photos! The covers are a two-color screenprint, inside packs more than 25 pages. Copies are \$3, with all proceeds going to benefit the *Fifth Estate*. Support the Pumpkin Hollow Distro!

For more information on Ross Winn, or to share some information, or to help this project eventually become a book, get in touch: rosswinn@riseup.net

—Nutmeg Brown and Ally Greenhead

Fifth Estate Letters Policy

We welcome letters commenting on our articles, ones stating opinions, or reports from your area. We can't print every letter we receive, but each is read by the collective and considered for publication. Letters via email or on disk are appreciated, but typed or hand-written ones are acceptable. Length should not exceed 400 words. We reserve the right to edit for length or style. If you are interested in writing a longer response, please contact us.



Post Office Box 6,
Liberty, TN 37095

fifthestate@pumpkinhollow.net

Nihilism as a Healthy Influence

Dear Fifth Estate:

After reading the review in "Leftism, Nihilism, and the Anarchy I seek," by Anu Bonobo in the Fall 2004 FE, I see that the writer has some issues with our *Green Anarchy* anti-utopian approach and nihilistic influences.

I personally feel (our collective is not in complete agreement here) that most, if not all, attempts at creating a "social movement" are naive, and most often come into conflict with anarchy. I feel we need to proceed without illusions, and fight civilization on our own terms, as with the lives we create for ourselves.

This stands opposed to the utopian mindset. I have no interest in creating a "new" and "improved" paradigm, but dispelling with the very notion. I have my own dreams and passions which motivate me, but those are personal (or at most, shared with a small group) and also limited by this unhealthy and stifling death-

culture I fight to destroy.

To be distinct, the ways in which I have been describing my efforts lately have been:

1) Rewilding and healing from the wounds inflicted upon us by civilization with those with whom I have deep affinity and desire for intimacy, while creating healthy living dynamics and projects with these people.

2) Putting out questions and my personal analysis of civilization, and resistance to it, for people to do what they want with.

3) Contributing to the diverse momentum-against civilization without ideological limitations, moral constraints, or entrenched expectations.

These modes of activity are not consistent with working to create a "new movement," which implies, and has always meant, a singular or ideological project at the expense of the individual. While discussions of strategy, engagement in an ongoing dialogue of what motivates us and our own personal analysis are important, we should be careful that they don't become prescriptions or proposals for a "revolutionary agenda."

Your review states: "Nihilism doesn't seem to be sustainable to me. When the nihilist rejects utopia, I can't really get with that." Exactly, nihilism rejects the notion of something to "get with." Is this not a complete rejection of ideology and morality, or preconceived notions of "revolution" or "another world?" Does this not interest you as an anarchist? Why do anarchists fall into the same "blue-print" traps that the Left, hell, that all of *this* society embraces and are limited by?

You also suggest that, "nihilism is selfish without self-awareness." What is self-awareness and who defines it? This seems to me to just be a moral judgment based on some progressive notion of the world.

Nihilism is a huge subject, too much to get into in one letter, but as amoral and anti-ideological anarchists wanting to "destroy all of this" without placing limits on our possibilities (both now and later), and without the delusional optimism of the '60s, nihilism offers some interesting influences to our anti-civilization critique.

While we don't totally embrace nihilism as a collective (nor I as an individual), its sobering influence will continue to be present in *Green Anarchy*, and hopefully an element of a larger dialogue of theory and action.

I feel as complex beings (and anar-

chists in particular), we can be inspired by and draw from an extensive assortment of ideas and influences (biocentrism, primitivism, insurrectionalism, nihilism, spirituality, etc.), without adopting any singular framework from which to view or interact with the world.

This, however, is different from a "nothing has foundation" post-modern cop-out, the "it's all good" ecumenical approach, or the liberal, "we need to all work together" mindset.

For an extended look at the problematic nature of utopian thinking, check out my article, "Beyond Utopian Visions: The Rejection of a 'Perfect' Society" in *Green Anarchy*, #17/Summer 2004 from POB 11331, Eugene OR 97440.

revoltingly yours,

A. Morefus (an insurrectionary green anarcho-nihilist)

Green Anarchy Collective
Eugene, Ore.

Anarchy, Mass Movements, and Common Sense

Dear FE Collective:

Thanks for Sunfrog's thoughtful review of my book, *Globalize Liberation* (See reviews, Fall 2004 FE), and for selling it at The Barn! Thinking and disagreement and critique are good and positive. In fact, I'm going to respond to your comments critically.

Yes, I came out of the anarchist milieu, but more importantly, out of popular direct action movements of the West Coast. That is where I learned to organize. True, I chose not to use the term anarchist widely in the intro, though a number of authors throughout the book use the term and quote anarchists extensively. Why?

Part of my goal with the book is to popularize radical ideas, and frankly, what you call the A-word has baggage that can be a constricting box. There will likely never be a mass anarchist movement in the US, but there have been and will continue to be mass movements that apply anarchist ideas.

The word puts us in bed with some really unhappy and not very thoughtful or strategic folks (in addition to lots of wonderful radicals that I love). Some anarchists are as sectarian as the worst Stalinists of the '70's and more disruptive than a COINTELPRO agent.

I'm not afraid of the word, recognize that I am influenced by anarchist ideas, and see myself in that tradition.

However, it's a bit arrogant to think that self-identified anarchists are the only ones with critiques of concentrated power or with visions and practices of how to re-organize society. In fact, the best practitioners of anarchist values (which are really not owned by anarchists but are pretty universal) have little use for the term.

From Argentina to Chiapas to India to South Africa to community organizers to ecologists to feminists to anti-racists: those actually applying the ideas most effectively more often than not do not find the word or identity that helpful.

Anarchy is certainly helpful and inspiring for small communities, subcultures, and networks. But very often anarchism is another rigid ideology from the last century and those who subscribe to it think they are correct and others are incorrect. They try to convince everyone to think like them or to apply a set of ideas, often not too changed from the last century, to very different situations.

I really think you may be missing the boat about the widespread new politics of horizontalism, zapatismo, and anti-authoritarian popular movements. People have really rethought things a lot and consciously avoided ideologies, containers, and labels.

You criticize my use of the term "common sense." Many—not all, but many—people have shared values: people deciding things that affect them, a sense of fairness or justice, basic respect and tolerance of difference, valuing clean air and water, etc. If we can use plain language and break ideas down as the best way to achieve widely held values, then that is explaining things in a "common sense way."

If you believe in clean air and water for our communities and kids, people in local impacted communities and those downwind and downstream may be the best folks to be responsible for protecting themselves, instead of corporate executives or toothless regulatory agencies. To me, that is making a common sense argument. It makes sense to most common folks, though maybe not to businesspeople, regulators, or leftist theorists.

Further, you contend that *Globalize Liberation* breaks no new ground. I really disagree. The book was written for thinking activists and organizers; perhaps you are reading through your theory head and missing the new praxis, practices, tools, and strategic frameworks in the book. It's also true that a few of the pieces can be found on the web and in zines and period-

icals (like two of the four Argentina articles I edited for *FE*), but I really have not seen any books that cover this ground. It's true that some of the theories are in *We are Everywhere*, but in terms of practice and praxis, it covers lot of new ground that no other book does.

David Solnit
San Francisco, Calif.

Anu Bonobo responds:

The magazine *Green Anarchy* is consistently provocative and promotes a rare intellectual irreverence and ferocity. The book *Globalize Liberation* brings together many courageous individuals who fight injustice and compiles radical ideas and revolutionary intent.

Here, David and A. Morefus carefully articulate two clearly distinct positions within the larger anti-authoritarian milieu and offer all of us an opportunity to reflect on important distinctions and particularities.

A common thread unites all three of us: the intent to move past ideological shackles and live our desires for anti-authoritarian reality. That common thread motivates me to further conversation.

Through his role as a leader in the international direct action and global justice movement, David intentionally distances himself from anarchy, even as he admits the anarchist nature of his practice and perspective. On the other hand, A. Morefus even more succinctly divorces himself from social movements and activism entirely, instead advocating wild living, personal healing, anti-civilization propaganda, and radical intimacy.

Myself, I admit differences with both perspectives but appreciate those who advocate them. David wants to point us towards that emphasis on practice, and I want to be part of the international social movement David describes; certainly we need a radical social movement now more than ever.

To get there, is it necessary to renounce even a theoretical anarchism for a vague notion of "new politics"? Based on what has been written, I'm fairly certain that we agree on what we want generally more than on how we articulate it specifically. How can we embrace what David calls "common sense" without engaging in the mediocre and conservative constructs that bring us into the mainstream of obedient compromise? Perhaps revolutionaries should read *more* theory and not be seduced by the proverbial anti-intellectualism that fuels the theocratic counter-revolution.

Further, I want a world without technocratic civilization, full with the healthy, wild intimacy that A. Morefus wants, but I refuse to endorse what sadly appears to be a narrowly defined, escapist set of anti-ideological ideologies in order to do so.

To the Fifth Estate,

I was released from Greensburg Prison in Pennsylvania two months ago. I served two-and-a-half years of a four-year sentence. Since my release in July, when I tried to take advantage of the programs that are supposed to be in place for the disadvantaged to get a job, I only got blank stares, the bum's rush, or outright hostility when I told them that I had been in prison. I cannot get past the stigma of having been in prison. So, this is my current dilemma.

My questions to you are: (1) How can I help to change the treatment disenfranchised persons receive? And (2) would it be possible to get a free subscription for now?

I'm frustrated, hungry, and pissed off about all the self-deluded people supporting Georgie "Dubya" Bush! Please give me an idea about what to do since I want to make a difference.

Christopher E. Sims
Evansville, Indiana

To the Fifth Estate,

I came across your extremely informative magazine and want to let you know "right on" with a left hand raised high above the Detroit River! My viewpoints are mutual on so many topics you featured regarding socialism, politics, and government lies.

I wish I'd have known about your magazine years ago. Unfortunately, I'm doing a 25-year sentence in the Florida prison system and have been on close management for a year and will be here for some more time. I love to read, and especially informative matter about world policies, and our very own corrupt governing system, led by war hungry Republicans like Bush. I'm only a Generation X; I didn't go to Viet Nam or Desert Storm, but my Dad and uncles did. I'm 35 years old and have seen a lot, as far as even Jackson State Prison.

I want to ask you if I could get a free subscription to the FE? I can and will spread word about your kick-ass magazine though if you'd be so kind as to help me out. Good job guys. Go Pistons!

Ben
Ponta Gorda, Florida

Review by erika biddle

Anarchist calendars not only help keep schedules for those who hate schedules, but also, locate and situate radical movements and events throughout the year, helping us remember or discover those radicals or actions that conventional history typically obscures or forgets.

Since 1992, Autonomedia's been publishing its *Calendar of Jubilee Saints* (designed each year by collagist James Koehnline, whose work has graced many *Fifth Estate* covers), and, since 1997, they've also done the *Sheroes and Womyn Warriors Calendar*, copiously compiled by Fred Ho and Samantha Smart. Interestingly, the Saints calendar has a precedent in the *Revolutionary Almanac* (1914), a journal edited by Hippolyte Havel (who amongst many other contributions to the movement, participated in NYC's Modern School and collaborated on Emma Goldman's magazine, *Mother Earth*) that featured a martyrology of executed attentat assassins, as well as victims of violence against strikers, etc. with dates. But the lushly information-filled *Jubilee Saints* "Everyday a Holiday!" calendar is the mother lode of his/hers-torical radical people. And the *Sheroes* calendar "is a 'Great Womyn of Herstory' people's calendar—of womyn who have challenged their societies and have advanced the struggle of the oppressed and exploited. For being sheroes, many of these womyn have decidedly not been celebrated by patriarchal or Eurocentric, bourgeois establishments." \$10 each; both calendars are available from The Barn, while supplies last. For more information, autonomedia.org.

The online *Daily Bleed* (eskimo.com/~recall/bleed/cal-mast.htm) has been produced by Recollection Used Books in Seattle since 1997 and is a "daily events update of radical, labor, anarchist, left, communist, alternative, cultural, literary and social events that occurred this day in history." Click on any date and you get more eclectic radical information than any wall calendar could possibly contain. Much of its content is drawn from the Autonomedia calendars, as well as a great French web-based project *L'Ephéméride Anarchiste*, unfortunately not yet translated (perso.club-internet.fr/ytak/).

The Slingshot Collective has produced a quarterly, independent, radical newspaper since 1988. Their ubiquitous paperbound, pocket-sized *Slingshot Organizer* is now in its 11th year of publication. As of 2005, *Slingshot Organizers* are available in two sizes, the original pocket-sized and larger—for those who really want to write down what they're doing. They come in a wide range of colors: from Folsom Prison Blues to Panty Cocktail Pink. There's a radical contact list at back, as well as space for writing notes, a menstrual calendar, information on how to keep chickens in an urban environment, info on police repression, and a short but useful nontoxic, non-intrusive list of "emergency contraception." For more information, slingshot.tao.ca/. The organizers are \$5 and \$9 respectively, and both are available from The Barn while supplies last.

The Freedom for Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War Calendar, a fundraising project with a commitment to raising awareness of PPs and POWs in the U.S. and Canada, is now in its 4th year. The 2005 calendar features artwork, poetry and texts by current and former PPs/POWs, such as: "Abu Ghraib

Need A Date?

Get An Anarchist Calendar

and the Logic of Conquest" by David Gilbert (formerly of the SDS, WUO, and BLA) and "Eco-Defence" (a letter to Jeffrey "Free" Luers). Calendar sales will directly benefit the New York State Task Force on Political Prisoners, Desis Rising Up and Moving (DRUM), and partner organizations that do direct support work for political prisoners, refugees and immigrants facing detention and deportation, and prisoners rights groups. Calendars are \$15 (\$9 for prisoners). For more information, twelvemonths.org.

A few other radical calendars:

The IWW's annual *Labor History Calendar*, with black and white photos, historic events, and a quote for each month is \$10. The IWW will celebrate its centenary in 2005 (iww.org/store/).

The War Resisters League is celebrating 50 years of publishing its annual *Peace Calendar*. The 2005 calendar has a preface by Howard Zinn, and features quotes by Sappho, Bhagavad Gita, Kropotkin, Goldman, Lessing, and Ginsberg. It also has a listing of peace and resistance organizations throughout the world. The book-sized, ring-binder calendar is \$12.95 (warresisters.org/wrl_publications.htm).

If you liked last year's naked Kansas anarchists calendar, you'll love the 2005 *Shirley's Girls: SAGE Women of South Florida*, a glossy, full-color wall calendar. Published by SAGE (Senior Action in A Gay Environment) SoFlo, this calendar also has its members posing completely or partially naked, in unabashed celebration. Available for \$12 (sageusa.org for more info).

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—Leafy

BOOKS

NEW!! Gale Ahrens, ed.

Lucy Parsons: Freedom, Equality & Solidarity Writings & Speeches, 1878-1937 (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr 2003) \$17 Lucy Parsons is a witness and victim of the social oppressions rampant during the years she lived. Her writings show her love for freedom, revolt, and justice.

Alexander Berkman

Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist (1912, 1970, 1999) \$15.00
One of the finest examples of both anarchist thought and prison writings.

What Is Anarchism? (AK Press 2003) \$14.00
Calling mutual aid the basis for our human, instinctual sense of justice, Berkman uses moral and practical approaches as he defines anarchism and describes cultural change.

Hakim Bey

T.A.Z.: The Temporary Autonomous Zone (1991) \$8.00

This is the classic that changed many of our lives in the early 1990s, now in its second edition with a new introduction from the author. Read this book again or get it for a friend.

Immediatism (1992) \$10.00

All experience is mediated, but thanks to Hakim Bey, we have an alternative.

Millennium (1996) \$8.00

A mid-1990s collection calling for a spirit-based revolution—rethinking the premises of Temporary Autonomous Zone in light of developments like the Zapatista uprising.

Bureau of Public Secrets

Situationist International Anthology (1982) \$15.00

This is the original and definitive collection of key Situationist texts.

Max Cafard

Surre(gion)alist Manifesto: and other writings (Exquisite Corpse 2003) \$12.00

CrimethInc.

Days Of War, Nights Of Love (2001) \$9.00

The definitive primer; an A-to-Z encyclopedia of techniques for smashing the state for fun and anti-profit.

Evasion (2001) \$6.00

The notorious text discussing the possibility of living for free under the capitalist radar.

Off the Map (2003) \$3.00

This is the story of two girls' travels through Spain in search of the better world they know is possible. A magical work of poetry and optimism. Share this book with all your friends!

Curious George Brigade

Anarchy In the Age Of The Dinosaurs (2003) \$6.00

A big-hearted, rough-around-the-edges romp through the usual divisive topics and some new areas of interest. Subversive fun.

Dark Star

Beneath the Paving Stones (2001) \$15.00

This anthology brings together the three most widely translated, distributed, and influential pamphlets of the Situationist International available in the 'sixties, along with an eyewitness account of the events of May 1968.

Guy Debord

Society of the Spectacle (1967) \$5.00

The first English translation of a path-blazing, radical text for everyone interested in Situationism. Don't accept academic imitations; this is the original Black and Red edition still available at a proletarian price.

Connie Koch / Hello

2/15: the day the world said NO to war (Hello and AK Press 2003) \$25.00

Hardbound coffee-table book with color pictures from all over the globe. Historic, collectible, heart-warming, somber.

Emma Goldman

Anarchism and Other Essays (Dover) \$10
From our free-spirited matron of the great Ideal, this amazing book remains one of the best introductions to anarchy available.

Derrick Jensen

A Language Older than Words (Chelsea Green Publishing 2002, 2004) \$20

In this provocative, visionary, desperate, and necessary book, Jensen challenges us with questions most people are too afraid to ask. Enlightening and poignant, this book will change you.

The Culture of Make Believe (Chelsea Green Publishing 2002, 2004) \$25

The follow-up to the above book, this discusses cultural malaise and how to grow toward a different humanity.

NEW Robert Jensen

Citizens of the Empire: The Struggle to Claim Our Humanity (City Lights Books 2004) \$12

Need help getting the right words to explain your stance on the issues? Grab this book and go talking! Jensen shows the parameters of sanity and how current situations overstep them. He challenges Western "realities" and shows us how to confront ourselves so we gain more personal responsibility in both personal and national affairs.

Dr. Ben Reitman

Sister of the Road: the Autobiography of Boxcar Bertha (2002) \$15.00

This autobiography recounts the depression-era saga of free-thinking, free-loving Bertha Thompson.

Fredy Perlman

Against His-story, Against Leviathan (Black & Red 1983) \$7

A former FE collaborator, Fredy Perlman writes imaginatively on the development of civilization—conceived as the systematic self-enslavement and self-alienation of human communities.

The Continuing Appeal of Nationalism Black & Red (1985) \$4

Lorraine Perlman

Having Little, Being Much: A chronicle of Fredy Perlman's Fifty Years Black & Red (1989) \$6

Fredy's life in interesting detail, showing his participation in the social struggles around him. Many with whom he collaborated, world-wide, are described.

Penelope Rosemont

Surrealist Experiences: 1001 Dawns, 221

Midnights (Chicago: Surrealist Editions 1999) \$12 A collection of previously published and previously unpublished articles. She addresses varied topics including play, alchemy and anarchy, and the future of surrealism.

Franklin Rosemont

Joe Hill: the IWW & the Making of a Revolutionary Working-class Counterculture (2002) \$18 Rosemont gives us a meticulous and definitive chronicle worthy of Hill's revolutionary spirit, sense of humor, and poetic imagination. A journey into the Wobbly culture that made Joe Hill, and the capitalist culture that killed him.

An Open Entrance to the Shut Palace of Wrong Numbers (Chicago: Surrealist Editions 2003) \$14 Using far-out analogies and mixed-metaphors, he creates a handbook for working toward a new society: equality, generosity, ecological health, freedom.

Revolution in the service of the Marvelous (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr 2003) \$14 This book is about living poetry. It also is a collection of essays that show how the surrealist perspectives have evolved during the past 60 years.

NEW! Franklin Rosemont & Charles Radcliffe, eds. and contributors.

Dancin' in the Streets! Anarchists, IWWs, Surrealists, Situationists & Provos in the 1960's as recorded in the pages of THE REBEL WORKER & Heatwave (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr 2005) \$15 Anti-capitalism, class-war humor, provocation, and the pleasure principle from around the world during the 1960's.

Franklin Rosemont, Penelope Rosemont & Paul Garon, eds. and contributors.
The Forecast Is Hot! Tracts & Other collective Declarations of the Surrealist Movement in the United States 1966-1976 (Chicago: Black Swan Press 1997) \$15

Starhawk

Webs of Power (2002) \$18
Direct from the affinity groups of the global justice movement, Starhawk offers radical reflection for the movement that began in Seattle and continues into the present.

Ron Sakolsky

Seizing The Airwaves: A Free Radio Handbook AK Press (1998) \$13
Describing the Free Radio Movement and its common topics. Even contains the "Ghetto Radio" Rap Song by the Kantako's.

Surrealist Subversions (Autonomedia 2002) \$23 Rants, writings, and images from the surrealist movement in the United States. Over 700 pages, this book is "An explosive and diverse assembly of voices"—from the FE review, Fall 2002

Ron Sakolsky & James Koehnline

Gone To Croatan: Origins of North American Dropout Culture (Autonomedia) \$14
An eloquent, solidly documented history of America's persistent dissidents: visionaries, angry women, tax rebels, tri-racial colonies and more—going clear back to the 1500's.

David Solnit

Globalize Liberation: How to Uproot the System and Build a Better World (City Lights 2004) \$18 A well-written and comprehensive review of the post-Seattle ideas. Use this as a 101 class in anti-capitalism.

Students at the University of Strasbourg and members of the Internationale Situationiste, Trans. by Lorraine Perlman. *On the Poverty of Student Life* (Black & Red 2000) \$3 Still a classic critique of the university as commodity.

David Watson

Against The Megamachine (1998) \$14
For readers wanting an introduction to FE's formative texts from the 1980s and 1990s, Watson delivers the goods. Wide-ranging essays ponder such themes as the state, empire and war, humanity's tragic relation to the natural world, and the contemporary mass society generated by industrial capitalism and modern technology.

Beyond Bookchin (1996) \$8

How Deep Is Deep Ecology? (1989) \$6
A classic and central text in the FE's ecological critique.

Peter Lamborn Wilson

Avant Gardening: Ecological Struggle in the City and the World (Autonomedia) \$8
In defense of the disappearing community gardens, natural seeds, and a good standard for "organic" methods, this book documents some successes and failures in eco-resistance.

Pirate Utopias: Moorish Corsairs & European Renegades (Autonomedia) \$10
Another best-selling book about the lost histories of rebels and renegades. Entertaining, with stories about insurrectionary communities.

Wildcat, 1974 (Black & Red) \$2
See the special reprint and tribute on page 34.

Workers Aid for Bosnia

Taking Sides—against ethnic cleansing in Bosnia: the story of the Workers Aid convoys (No date) \$25.00

DVD

Arundhati Roy
Instant-Mix Imperial Democracy and Come September: Two Talks by Arundhati Roy, with Howard Zinn DVD (AK Press, 2003) \$30.00
Three hours of honest perspectives. A noted author from India, Roy speaks as one of the "undeceived." She calls herself one of the world-wide subjects of the Empire—one who is exposing her king, George the Lesser. Consistent, factual, clarifying, cleverness.

CALENDARS for 2005

Slingshot Organizers: \$5.00, pocket-size.

\$9.00, 1/2 notebook-size.

Autonomedia Wall Calendars

Calendar of Jubilee Saints \$10
Sheroes and Womyn Warriors Calendar \$10

ZINES

These are usually \$4.00 each postage-paid, or free with a book order.

NEW Black Sun

Black Sun #12 is a wild/earthy/neopagan/anarchist/pansexual (de)light in the hollow pumpkin that illuminates the sinister darkness of Bush's Amerikkka with a raging green riot of shiny, defiant tendrils proudly pushing their way up amidst the clearcut political landscape of monocultural domination.

Whether detouring the ominous and omnipresent "W" to reveal its true nature as the swastika of the "Nascar messiah," or giving us a poetic first-hand account of the RNC as "the Exorcist meets *Reclaim the Streets*, *Matewan* meets Mardi Gras," or publishing for the first time, beyond the beleaguered electronic boundaries of Indymedia, the incendiary "Breaking The Leash" tract by the Surrealists International, which was written as a response to those same Republican coronation ceremonies, or providing an intriguing sketch of passionate affinities between anarchy and chivalric orders by Hakim Bey; or lovingly reprinting historical gems like the essential radical performance text, "Ritual," by Julian Beck of the Living Theatre: this zine is one helluva righteous experience.

Beyond the printed page, the right Reverend Bonobo has for the first time included with this issue a pirated/laptop recorded/CD mix tape, entitled, "'Folk Bush,'" which features such usual suspects as Bitch and Animal, Steve Earle, Billy Bragg and David Rovics proudly flying their anti-war colors and disturbing the social peace, along with the screeds and inspirational romps of lesser known artists like Seize the Day, Life, and This Bike is a Pipe Bomb. And, did I mention that this explosive little package is lavishly illustrated with full color front and back covers boldly beaming out radiant rays of black sunshine?

—Ron Sakolsky

Clamor An integral part of the revival in radical print publishing, consistently strong & readable.

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Green Anarchy Provocative anti-civilization journal.

Ross Winn: Digging up a Tennessee Anarchist: New! See page 41.

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FIFTH ESTATE

Revolution Everywhere Fifth Estate on tour in 2005

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radical publishing



We hope to visit a vast variety of people and venues, sharing stories about the history and future of radical publishing in North America. We are still in the process of planning and booking our tour. Please contact us if you would like to help organize a show. We will be available for most of the year. Also, we are seeking performers to join us on most dates.

To confirm any date on this calendar, please email fifthestate@pumpkinhollow.net or call 615-536-5999

Monday, December 13, 2004

Magazine Release party for 367 & Benefit for the anniversary issue in Nashville, 6pm to Midnight, film, music, & spoken word, details TBA

Friday, December 17, 2004

Magazine Release party for 367 & Benefit for the anniversary issue, featuring The Urban Folk Collective, Alan Franklin, Velvet Audio, MC Sunfrog, and more. In Detroit, 6pm to Midnight, at Idle Kids Books & Records, 3535 Cass Avenue, Detroit, MI 48201 (313) 832-7730 info@idlekids.com

Saturday, March 5, 2005

40th Anniversary tour kicks off in New Orleans, Louisiana. Details TBA.

Thursday, March 10—Sunday, March 13, 2005

40th Anniversary tour comes home to central Tennessee for the first Southern Convergence for Alternative Media (SCAM). The "Folk the War" Concert, Film Screenings, Readings, 'Zine Tabling, & much more.

Saturday, March 19, 2005

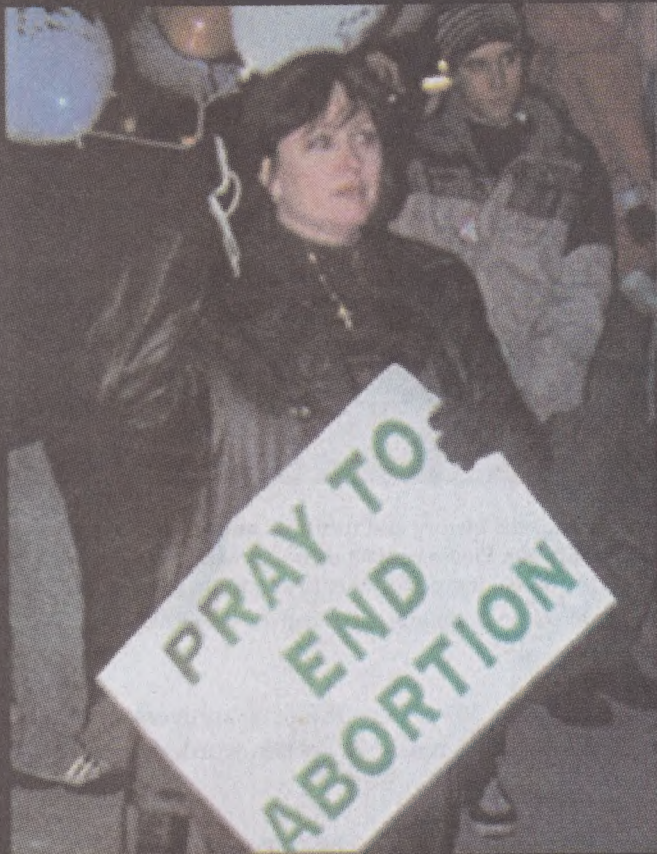
Memphis, Tennessee. Details TBA.

Thursday, March 24—Sunday, March 27, 2005

We will be at the 10th Annual San Francisco Anarchist Book Fair & other events in the Bay Area, California. Details TBA.

Upcoming: June 2005, Midwest; July 2005, Northeast; August 2005, Pacific Northwest

moral morass **SAVE** the **UNBORN** **KILL** the **CHILDREN**



As a result of the 1990s sanctions against Iraq and since the 2003 Invasion, at least 600,000 children have died as a direct consequence of US war policy. While the pro-Bush hypocrites self-righteously speak of morality at home and abroad, they turn a blind eye to children slaughtered in their name.

America . . . What the hell is wrong with you!

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REFUSING the MARKETPLACE

by Ron Sakolsky



—Maurice Spira

this regard with a passivity-inducing diet of anti-depressants, computer game tidbits, “reality” television morsels, and Clear Channel sound bites; all of which are conveniently provided for our consumption by the market itself. Together they serve to screen out or allay those fears of the marketplace considered to be abnormal and triumphantly proclaim the normality of a way of life predicated upon hierarchy, competition and the unequal distribution of power and wealth.

We are encouraged to voyeuristically watch a growing array of dog-eat-dog survival shows which contrast sharply with the boredom of our daily work ruts and leisure time passivities. We are made prey to makeover shows that exploit our body image insecurities and remind us that our physical imperfections can be masked or surgically eliminated for a price. As an ego boost, we can conveniently turn on *Jerry Springer* to allow us to feel superior to the oh so tacky losers who are his guests. And, along with the cheezy competitors on *American Idol*, we are enticed to vicariously dream of being stars with enough fame and fortune to purchase anything we want.

Though this manipulative media landscape and the capitalist marketplace of which it is a part are social constructions which can be dismantled, they are assumed to be permanent givens by the rulebook of consensus reality. Even if while consuming this programming, a mysterious fear should well up in us, we have been conditioned not to blame the market. The officially prescribed remedy is to turn on the tv and increase the dosage of consumption.

Increasingly then, we find that both our psychic well-being and our individual identities have become synonymous with market demographics. It is no accident that Dubya in a televised speech urged troubled Americans to go shopping when faced with the horrors of 911. Not only does hyper-consumption fuel the economy, but our fears of the market are marketed back to us in the form of frightening images of appallingly evil foreign terrorists who are said to be jealous of our high consumption lifestyle or anti-corporate globalization protesters who are seen as so disdainful of our affluent position in the world that they are as bad as terrorists themselves. In this